

YANKEE DOODLE

COMPLETE STORIES OF THE PRESENT WAR.

Issued Semi-Monthly—By Subscription \$1.25 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at the New York Post Office, by Frank Tousey.

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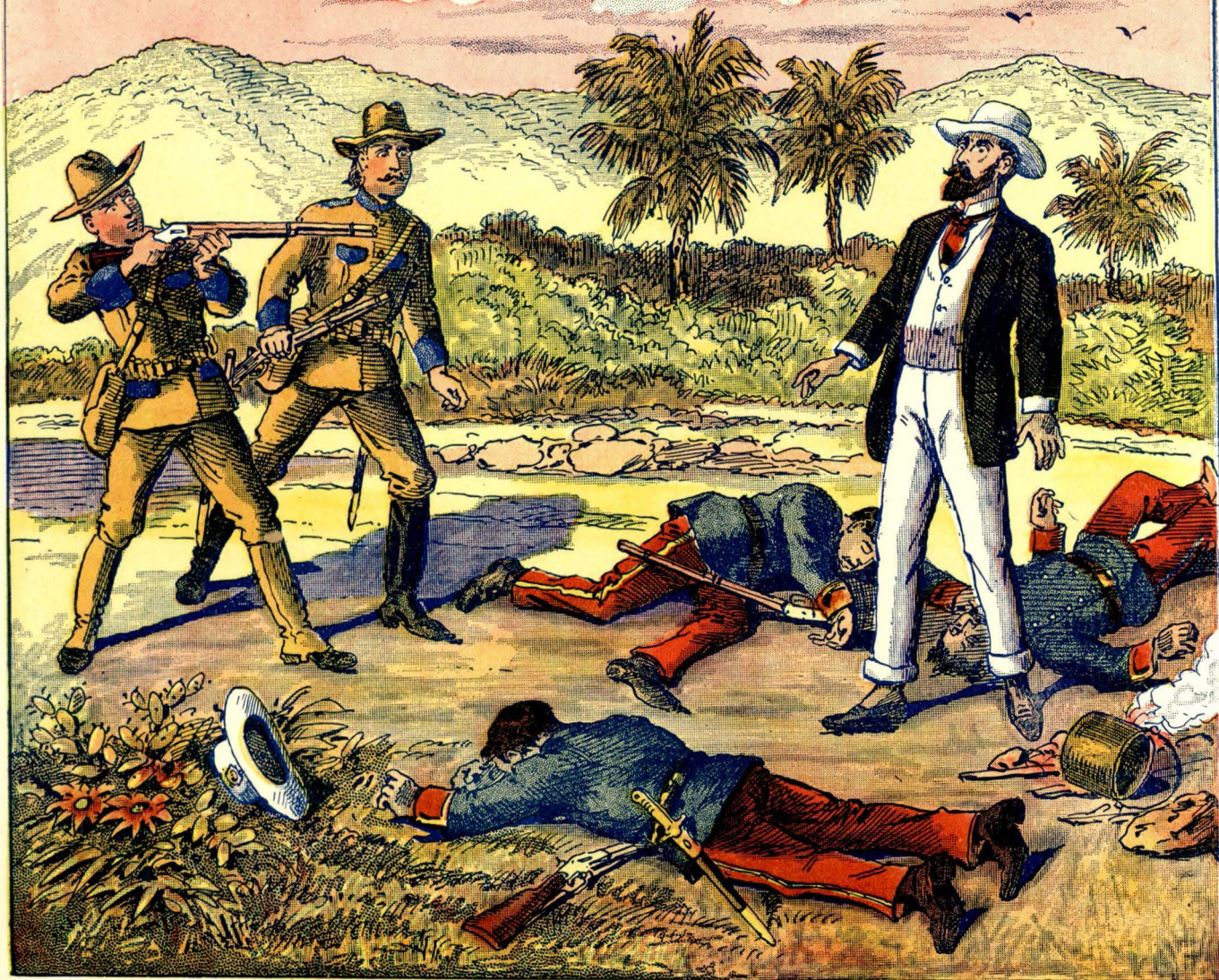
Price 5 Cents.

YANKEE DOODLE AND THE UNKNOWN;

OR

THE SECRET OF SPAIN'S DEFEAT.

BY AUTHOR OF "YANKEE DOODLE."



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"Ah," he said, "you are Americanos?"

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CHAPTER I.

WHAT THE GENERAL ASKED YANKEE DOODLE TO DO.

AFTER the battle of San Juan hill the American forces found themselves in a perilous situation. The roads were in such a condition that it was almost impossible to bring up supplies of rations and ammunition from the coast to the fighting line. What roads they did have they had to make themselves, and about as fast as they made them the floods, caused by the great downpour of rain, daily tore them to pieces.

Where the water failed to cut gullies it made the ground so soft and yielding that man, beast and wheels sank into it easily on an average of a foot in depth.

The men were not only in danger of starving, but the wounded were exposed to perils almost too terrible to relate. There were no ambulances to convey them to the coast eight or ten miles away, so they had to lie about on the ground scorched by the sun at day and chilled by the cold rains at night. Wounded men were compelled to wend their way back that distance by the help of rude crutches cut from the bushes. Some few were aided by their comrades, while almost all were compelled to go from twenty-four to thirty-six hours without having their wounds dressed.

How men could stand such suffering and deprivation and live to tell the story passes understanding.

On the fighting line, which was spread out some three or four miles in length, the force was so depleted by the casualties of battle, coupled with lack of food and water, that grave apprehensions were felt by many officers who foresaw defeat should the enemy force the fighting. Nearly all the officers urged a retrograde movement in order to be able to form a line that they could hold against attack. They reasoned that they were too far away from their base of

supplies to enable them to hold their then present position. But for the indomitable pluck of General Wheeler the movement would have been made.

He protested to the commander of the army that to fall back an inch would greatly injure the prestige of American arms, and urged that every available man should be pushed over the hills to the fighting line, that it might be held against the enemy at all hazards.

It was almost impossible to find out what the enemy was doing or contemplated doing, as both flanks, as well as the front, was continuously under the fire of sharpshooters, who, with their smokeless powder, could blaze away with impunity, as in the thickets it was impossible to locate them.

It is fair to say that were their marksmanship half as good as the ordinary American schoolboys, Wheeler's position would have been utterly untenable. They fired incessantly, using up an enormous amount of ammunition, but not one in a hundred shots took effect. Yet it tended to render uneasy the soldiers on the line, as well as those in the rear, where surgeons, Red Cross nurses and wounded men were made targets of indiscriminately.

Wounded men lying in tents, over which hospital flags waved, were shot at as though they were in the trenches at the front with arms in their hands.

Still, in the face of all this peril, Wheeler held his men in line. The Rough Riders and the regulars never gave way an inch, but held the line day and night, sleepless and hungry.

Such was the situation when Yankee Doodle, the famous New York drummer boy, who had won almost a national reputation thus early in the war, appeared among the Rough Riders. He had come up from Guantanamo with Jack Wilson, a cowboy from Arizona. He had made his way through the Span-

ish lines and struck the road from Siboney which led over the hills to where the battle had been fought.

He had brought information for General Shafter, but when he struck the Siboney road he was under the impression that the general was up at the front, but he was down at the coast, hurrying the disembarkation of the troops from the transports, and sending them over the hill to the front.

On learning that the general was not there, Yankee Doodle hastened to find General Wheeler. He found the famous soldier, whose iron will was holding the line as with hooks of steel, giving his orders with a coolness and precision that put new heart into everyone who saw and heard him.

As Yankee Doodle saluted him the general looked keenly at him, and asked :

"Well, what is it, my boy?"

"I am just from Guantanamo, general," he answered, "and have come to report to General Shafter, but as he is not here I think you ought to know the news I have brought."

"Very well, my boy, let me have it," said the general.

"Well, it is this, general. There is a strong body of Spanish soldiers almost directly in your rear between here and Guantanamo. It is true they are kept busy by the American force in their front, but their rear is almost up against yours, and your wounded all along the road between here and Siboney and thence down to the seashore are being picked off by their sharpshooters every hour in the day. Now I don't know what your force is on this line, but I do know that it is considered perilous by all military men for one army to get into the rear of another. If they should cease fighting at Guantanamo and close in behind you, your rear would become your front, and your front would be changed to your rear."

The grizzled old cavalryman listened to his story without uttering a word, and when Yankee Doodle had finished, he remarked :

"Your news is important—vitally so—and you are the only one I have found who seems to understand the situation. I will send your report to General Shafter, and at the same time ask that you go back close enough to the enemy to keep a watch on him. If you want any men to go with you, you can have them."

"I have one man with me, general, and I think that we two can do more good than a dozen or a score, as we would be less likely to be seen or attract attention."

"Go ahead then, and use your own discretion as to your movements."

Yankee Doodle saluted and hurried away to join Jack Wilson, who was with a number of his comrades among the Rough Riders. He knew exactly where to find him, so no time was lost. He found time, however, to stop and exchange greetings with Colonel Roosevelt, whose splendid fighting qualities, as displayed in the battle of San Juan hill, had made him the idol of the Rough Riders.

"Where have you been, my boy?" the colonel asked.

"I have just come through from Guantanamo."

"Guantanamo?" exclaimed the colonel; "how did you manage to get through?"

"By playing rabbit, slipping through the bushes, crawling under logs, gliding around the bowlders and lying low in many places and saying nothing."

"Very good," laughed the colonel, "you seem to know how to do it."

"That is the only way I could get through, colonel," he laughed, "for the Spaniards were as thick as grasshoppers and as lively as fleas; and there's a big crowd of them, too."

"What are they doing down there?" the colonel asked.

"Shooting off their Mausers as fast as they can, and occasionally knock over some of our fellows."

"Where are you going now?" asked the colonel.

"Jack and I are going back in that direction to watch them."

"What! Are you going to spy?"

"Well, I'm not going to enter their lines; I suppose it might be called scouting."

"Well, good luck to you," said the colonel, and Yankee Doodle saluted and hurried away to find Wilson.

He found his comrade talking with some of the Arizona boys, and said to him :

"Hurry up, Jack; we must get three days' rations, and get away again as quickly as possible."

"All right, pard," assented Jack, turning again to shake hands with his comrades. Just as he extended his hand his hat flew off his head. He quietly stooped, picked it up and looked at it. There were a couple of bullet holes in the crown.

"If that fellow had shot three inches lower," said he, "I would have gone down with the hat."

"That's a pretty good shot," remarked Yankee Doodle.

"Yes," he replied; "if he aimed at me, it was; but those fellows seem to point a gun in a certain direction, and shut their eyes before they pull the trigger; but there are so many of them around that some of us are bound to get hit, just like boys are in a hail storm. I don't believe a single American has yet been killed by the deliberate aim of a Spaniard; and I'll bet they fired a million rounds of cartridges in the battle day before yesterday."

"A million," laughed Yankee Doodle, "why their sharpshooters fire that many every day."

The two hurried off to the commissary in quest of rations. They failed to find him, but Colonel Roosevelt had managed by the greatest exertion to get up some rations for his men, and without waiting for any red tape in the matter promptly supplied their wants and thus enabled them to get away.

An hour later they were wending their way eastward over the hills that in some places seemed almost insurmountable. As they were passing to the rear

Jack heard the whistle of a Mauser bullet, and felt the wind of it in his face.

"Pard," said he, "the fellow that fired that shot is out on the left somewhere about a hundred yards away, high up in a tree, and I'm going to find him before I go any further."

"All right," said Yankee Doodle, "I'm with you."

They crept under the bushes on their left, and dropped on their hands and knees in order to keep out of view of the sharpshooters.

After going about fifty yards, Jack stopped and whispered:

"There they are, pard, three of them."

"Where?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Why, in that big tree over there, not more than seventy-five yards away," and he pointed with his finger in the direction of a large tree on the side of the hill on their front.

"I don't see them," said Yankee Doodle, after looking for a minute.

"Well, just let your eye run along my rifle barrel, and you'll see them," and he raised his rifle and aimed.

"Oh, yes," said Yankee Doodle, "I see them, three of them."

"Yes, there are three, and there may be three more in the same tree, whom we cannot see from here; but we'll knock those out and take our chances of finding the others. The smoke of our shot will show them where we are, so we'll both aim and fire at the same time, and then jump into that clump of bushes out there on the left."

They both raised their rifles, aimed, and fired quickly. Then they dashed for a clump of bushes about fifteen feet away on their left.

"Say, pard," chuckled Jack, "did you hear them fall?"

"You bet I did, and if the shots didn't kill them the fall did."

Jack crawled a little further through the bushes in search of the third man he had seen, and after a delay of a couple of minutes, called to Yankee Doodle:

"Now, pard, listen to the dull thud," and the next moment he fired again.

The dull thud was plainly heard by them, as the Spaniard dropped a distance of nearly forty feet to the ground.

"Pretty good, Jack," said Yankee Doodle. "Are there any more up in that tree?"

"That's what I'm trying to find out. If there are they won't stay there long," and he crept forward on his hands and knees, with Yankee Doodle close behind him.

Presently they were within fifty feet of the big tree from which the Spaniards had been shot, and a quiet survey told them that there were no more on the perch. Jack got up and went over to where the three men lay. He found them dead as smoked herrings.

"Say, pard," said he, as he picked up the Mauser

rifle of one of the dead Spaniards, "I'm going to freeze onto this gun and keep it for my own use."

"What are you going to do with your own?" Yankee Doodle asked him.

"I'm going to chuck it away somewhere, and let it lay there until I want it again, for there is no use in using powder, the smoke of which locates us every time we fire."

"That's so," said Yankee Doodle, "but we'll have to furnish our own ammunition."

"Oh, that's easy enough, for the Rough Riders alone gathered up over two thousand Mauser cartridges after the fight the other day. We are liable at any moment to get in a tight place in these woods, and if we have Mausers and smokeless powder, we stand a much better show to come out ahead of the game than we would with the common black powder."

They picked up the three Mauser rifles and found that one of them had been broken by falling upon a stone, but the other two were all right, together with nearly a hundred cartridges in the belts of the three Spaniards.

They then looked around for a place where they could conceal their own rifles, with a view to getting them again when needed. A hunt of a few minutes enabled them to find a hollow log where they would be secure from the dampness of the drenching rain.

They shoved the rifles into the hollow, and then chucked it full of leaves, after which they proceeded over the hill in the direction of Guantanamo.

Away out on their right they could hear the constant popping of Mausers in the hands of sharpshooters, firing at the Americans who were coming and going along the road to and from Siboney.

"Say, pard," said Jack, as he listened at the firing, "when we get through with this little job I'd like to just lie around in those woods out there and drop those fellows out of the trees. They are the meanest cusses that ever pulled a trigger, as they are firing upon wounded men, surgeons and army nurses instead of at the men in the front who can return their fire."

"That's so," assented Yankee Doodle, "and if they are keeping that up when we get back, we'll get about a dozen sharpshooters out of the Rough Riders and go for them. I think we can make them tired of that sort of thing."

When they reached the top of the heavily wooded hill they could see several miles across the country over a low range of hills that lay between them and Guantanamo.

"It's a rough way, pard," remarked Yankee Doodle.

"Yes, so it is, but there is nothing soft in this country but the blamed mud."

"Well, you didn't expect to find it a soft snap, did you?" laughed Yankee Doodle.

"No, I'm not the man to waste any time hunting for soft snaps, but this thing is just a few degrees tougher than I had calculated upon now. All the same, I

don't think the Spaniards are having any better time than we are."

CHAPTER II.

YANKEE DOODLE GETS HOLD OF A QUEER PRISONER.

THE two young Americans pushed their way eastward over hill and down dale for several hours. Naturally their progress was very slow, as they were compelled to avoid paths and trails lest they be seen by scouts of the enemy.

Nevertheless they ran against a party of three Spaniards who were cooking a meal close by a spring. The two parties saw each other about the same time. Yankee Doodle and Jack would have avoided them had they been permitted to do so, but the Spaniards sprang to their guns and called a halt.

Of course neither Jack nor Yankee Doodle obeyed the order, but sprang into the bushes, and would have passed on without exchanging further civilities with them had they not been fired on. The three Spaniards blazed away right into the clump of bushes in which they had taken refuge, and the bullets whistled so close to the two that they sprang out into the little clearing, and returned the fire.

Two of the Spaniards dropped to the ground, shot clear through the body. The third one stood stock still on seeing his comrades fall and stared at the two Americans as if wondering what they would do next.

"What did you shoot at us for?" Yankee Doodle asked them.

"You are Americanos," he replied.

"Very true, but we didn't come to pick any row with you; if you'll share your dinner with us, you can go unharmed."

"No, senor," returned the Spaniard, "I will not eat with you. My rations are yours by the rules of war."

"Oh, you surrender, do you?"

"No, senor, I am your prisoner without surrender."

"Oh," laughed Yankee Doodle, "that's a bit of Spanish honor, is it?"

"I hope there is nothing wrong about that?" remarked the Spaniard.

"Oh, nothing wrong—only a little queer."

"What is queer about it, senor?"

"You claim to be a prisoner of war, while at the same time keeping your arms in a menacing attitude. You'd better drop that rifle."

"You must come and take it, senor."

Jack started towards the fellow, who quick as a flash lowered his rifle and fired at him without aiming. The bullet passed within an inch of the cowboy's neck, and close to Yankee Doodle's head, who was but a few paces behind him.

Jack stopped and drew up his rifle to fire. But Yankee Doodle was the quicker, for he fired at the Spaniard, also without aiming, and the bullet passed through his right shoulder. Just a second or two later Jack fired and the fellow went down on his knees.

"What do you think of that, pard?" Jack asked Yankee Doodle.

"I think the fellow is a fool, or else took us for a pair of them."

"Senor," groaned the Spaniard, "it was an accident. I did not mean to fire."

"If that is true," returned Yankee Doodle, "I'm sorry for you."

"It is too late, senor," groaned the man again, and he fell forward on his face, pressing his hand to his side.

"Pard, I guess he's right," said Jack. "I cannot believe that the fellow meant to fire at us."

"Maybe so," assented Yankee Doodle, "but it was a pretty close call for both of us, for had he hit me he would have strung both of us on the same bullet."

In a few minutes the Spaniard was dead, and the two Americans appropriated the dinner which he had just prepared. They had scarcely finished the meal, when they heard someone coming through the bushes.

Quick as jack rabbits could have done so, the two sprang into the thicket just back of them, where they waited to see who the new-comer might be. Whoever he was, he appeared to make no attempt to conceal his approach, for he boldly emerged into the little clearing by the spring.

That he was a Spaniard, his complexion and dark beard fully attested. He was a tall, dignified-looking man of middle age. He had a soldierly bearing, but wore no uniform. He was well dressed, but his clothes and shoes bore evidence of contact with the bushes of the great forest.

When he saw the three Spanish soldiers lying dead near the spring, the stranger stopped and glared around him as though utterly dumfounded. He stood there for nearly five minutes gazing and listening, whilst the two Americans concealed in the thicket scarcely fifteen paces away silently watched him.

He went over to each of the dead soldiers and placed his hand on his face.

"They have just been killed," they heard him mutter to himself in Spanish, "and their slayers must be close by, unless they killed each other in a quarrel. They were to wait for me here, and now my plans are all upset," and he straightened himself up to his full height and gazed around the little clearing as though uncertain what next to do.

After a pause of several minutes, he remarked:

"I shall have to return," and he started across the clearing in the direction he had just come.

"Halt there, senor," called Yankee, stepping out of the thicket and holding his rifle for instant use.

The man wheeled around quickly and looked at him.

"Ah," he said, "you are Americanos?"

"So we are, senor. And you; who are you?"

"I am a civilian, senor, and, as you see, unarmed, except with this," and he drew from the inside of his vest a small dagger, which he exhibited.

"That's all right, senor," said Yankee Doodle.

"We Americans make no war of non-combatants,

but we must hold you as a prisoner until satisfied as to your identity."

"Very well, *Senor Americano*, I shall not resist, because it would be worse than useless for me to do so."

"You reason pretty well for a Spaniard," laughed Yankee Doodle, "and if you can give a logical explanation of why you were to meet these three soldiers here it is possible we may permit you to go free."

"I can make no explanation to you, *senor*, so I am in your power to do with as you see proper."

"That's strange," said Yankee Doodle, "for we heard you say those men were waiting here for you, and we naturally conclude that you have some connection with the Spanish army."

"You can make what inference you please, *senor*, but I will make no explanation. I regret exceedingly that those three brave fellows have met their death as they have."

"You cannot regret that any more than we do, *senor*," returned Yankee Doodle, "as we came upon them quite unexpectedly, and would have passed on without molesting them had they not fired upon us. We returned their fire in self-defense, with the result that you see."

"That is quite natural," said the other, "as you are all soldiers, bound to shoot each other at sight. I cannot understand why you would pass them without a fight."

"That's easy enough to explain," said Yankee Doodle; "it is to our interest to avoid meeting any Spanish soldiers in these woods."

"You are American spies, then?"

"By no means. Spies go unarmed and without their uniforms. You can see that we are not only well armed, but also have on the uniform of the American army. We are simply scouts sent to watch the movements of the enemy at Guantanamo. I tell you that much that you may understand our presence here, and as we do not intend to let you return the way you came, we run no risk in telling you as much."

"What do you intend doing with me then, *senor*?"

"We shall take you to General Shafter."

"And where is he?" the Spaniard asked.

"He is on the line in front of Santiago."

"You mean in front of El Caney?" corrected the Spaniard.

"How do you know that?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Because I know the Spanish army is strongly intrenched there, and that they are between you and Santiago."

"You seem to be pretty well posted, *senor*, for a civilian?"

A smile swept across the dark face of the Spaniard for a moment or two, after which he remarked:

"Intelligent civilians always know more of the military situation than the soldiers themselves, except the officers at the head of affairs."

"You're right," laughed Jack, who had been quietly listening to the conversation. "Private sol-

diers in any army know nothing except what they see right around them. But as we are all in the woods where there are neither telegraphs, railroads nor newspapers, how in thunder do you happen to know what the situation is at El Caney?"

"I make it my business to find out, *senor*. I not only know what the Spanish force is at El Caney, but I also know the strength of your army, and the great danger to which it is exposed."

"Great danger, eh?" said Yankee Doodle. "We are here in search of danger; we met a good deal of it at San Juan and very quickly disposed of it. And we are going to dispose of the danger in our front at El Caney, whenever our officers give the word."

"Your officers and men are brave, but they cannot accomplish impossibilities. A few days more and the situation will be entirely changed, for your army will be driven over the hills and down to the seashore, where not even the guns of the fleet can save them from utter destruction."

Both Jack and Yankee Doodle smiled incredulously.

"I have no doubt you think so, *senor*," said Yankee Doodle, "but American armies are not in the habit of being served that way. You have just said that Americans are brave men and good soldiers; I can say the same of the Spaniards, with the single exception that they don't know how to shoot to kill, for what losses we met with at the battle of San Juan Hill was not the result of good marksmanship, but simply of a hail of random bullets. Individually the Spanish soldier is a poor marksman. Those three men lying there fired at us at a range of less than fifty feet, yet we were not touched. We returned the fire with the result that you see. So if you are thinking that the Spaniards are going to drive the American army from their position in front of El Caney, you are making a false reckoning."

"*Senor Americano*," the man replied, "you will know more three days hence than you do now."

"I hope I will, *senor*; I hope that as long as I live I will learn something every day, and always know more the day after than the day before. You will have to submit to a search, *senor*, for we are not willing that a prisoner shall retain any arms in his possession."

"Very well, *senor*;" and the man held both arms above his head, and waited to be searched.

Jack made the search, but found nothing upon him, except the watch, a pocket-knife, a few pesos of Spanish gold and the dagger which he had exhibited. He took nothing but the dagger, which he turned over to Yankee Doodle.

"Now, *senor*," said the latter, "we shall not bind you in any way, but you must understand that the least attempt to escape will result in your death."

"I understand that, *senor*, and assure you that I have no desire to be shot by you or anyone else. Will you permit me to get a drink of water from the spring?"

"Certainly," was the reply, "and the man plucked

a leaf, with which he improvised a dipper, and quenched his thirst.

Yankee Doodle and Jack followed his example, and then held a short consultation as to what they should do with the prisoner.

They didn't hesitate to let him know that they regretted very much that he had fallen into their hands.

"Senor," said he, "I will give you no trouble whatever if you will release me and let me go my way."

"No doubt of that," laughed Yankee Doodle, "and that would be a very easy solution of the problem; the same might be said of all prisoners, but we are not fully satisfied that you are a non-combatant."

"Isn't it the rule," the stranger asked, "to regard all men who are not in uniform as non-combatants?"

"Yes, but in your case the circumstances are very suspicious, as it is very evident that you have some connection with those three soldiers, and that you had come here to meet them by appointment."

"Very true, senor, but it was a private personal matter, and has no bearing upon the military situation whatever."

"Why not tell me, then, what it was?"

"Because it is a personal matter."

"Say, pard," said Jack to Yankee Doodle, "I reckon we had better let him go."

"Oh, no!" said Yankee Doodle, shaking his head; "he would soon have the woods full of Spaniards looking for us."

"Senor Americano, if that is what troubles you, I will pledge you my word of honor that I will make no mention of your presence in these woods, or of having met you."

"Where will you go if we release you?" Yankee Doodle asked him.

"To Guantanamo."

"Do you live there?"

"That is my home for the present."

"I was in Guantanamo a few days ago," remarked Yankee Doodle, on hearing which the prisoner gave him a quick, searching glance, which he and Jack were quick to perceive.

"How did you get away from there?" he asked.

"I flew up very high in the air and sailed away with wings."

The Spaniard smiled, and Jack chuckled.

"Pardon me, senor," said the prisoner; "it is natural to ask questions, you know."

"So it is, and we Yankees are more given to it, perhaps, than any other people on earth. If you will give us your name we will let you go after we are satisfied that you will not put any soldiers on our trail."

"You may call me Emilio Sanguilly."

"Oh, as for that matter we can call you anything, but I guess High-cockalooram is about as near your name as Sanguilly is."

Again Jack chuckled and the prisoner smiled, after which Jack added;

"We will go back part of the way with you, senor," and after taking another drink of water from the spring they re-entered the woods, and began mak-

ing their way over the hills in the direction they had been traveling all the day.

The prisoner kept up with them, and occasionally made remarks that evinced a disposition on his part to be a bit sociable. It didn't take him long to find out that while Jack was some ten or twelve years older than Yankee Doodle the latter was evidently the master spirit of the two, and that if he was not really an officer, he was the head of the little expedition on which they were going. He remarked to Jack that his comrade was very young to be a soldier and an officer.

"So he is," assented Jack, "but he has on old head on those shoulders of his, and has always proven himself equal to every duty to which he has been assigned."

CHAPTER III.

"THE FATE OF THE ARMY DEPENDS UPON US TWO OUT HERE IN THE WOODS!"

OUR two heroes were now pretty close up in the rear of the Spanish army in the vicinity of Guantanamo, and they naturally became very cautious in their movements. Their unknown prisoner kept close behind them, and stopped whenever they did, crouching in the bushes to avoid being seen, just as he saw them do.

At one time they were in sight of a party of a dozen Spanish soldiers, who passed along a road within fifty feet of them. They crouched in the bushes to avoid being seen, and Yankee Doodle, still doubtful of the prisoner, held his rifle in readiness to shoot him down on the least appearance of treachery on his part, but in no instance did he observe the least inclination on the part of the prisoner to invite a shot.

When the soldiers had passed they arose to their feet and crossed over to the other side of the road. As they did so they were seen by several Spanish soldiers farther up the road, whose presence had not been noticed.

"Senor," said the prisoner, "I think we have been seen, and that we are about to be pursued."

"Well, you're glad of that, are you not?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"On the contrary, senor, I should regret very much at being found in your society, as in that event I would very promptly be shot."

"Do you think so?"

"Si, senor, I know it."

By this time they heard sounds of pursuit, and they quickened their speed through the bushes.

Several rifle shots rang out behind them, and the whistle of Mauser bullets told that the prisoner was right when he said they had been seen.

"Push ahead, Jack," cautioned Yankee Doodle; "it won't do to exchange shots with them."

"Senor," said the prisoner, "if you keep on in this direction you will certainly be captured, for you will run into bodies of Spanish soldiers in a very few minutes."

"Are you sure of that?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"I know it, senor. Your only way of escape is to turn to the left and keep on in that direction."

"All right, then; much obliged to you," said Yankee Doodle, and they turned and made their way in a northerly direction, while the sounds of pursuit still reached them.

After going a little way they suddenly missed their prisoner.

"He has given us the slip, pard," said Jack.

"So he has, and I'm glad of it, for now we will have nobody to look after but ourselves."

They pushed along for nearly a mile, by which time they found themselves climbing a very high wooded hill. They toiled onward and upward until they reached the crest from which they could see the encampments of Spanish regiments all about the city of Guantanamo.

Yankee Doodle had a field-glass with him, which he used to survey the scene spread out before them for several miles.

"There's a pretty good crowd of 'em, pard," remarked Jack, whose eyesight was as keen as that of an eagle.

"Yes," answered Yankee Doodle, "and I hope they'll stay here until we get through with the crowd at El Caney and Santiago, for if they break camp and close in behind our boys at San Juan Hill we will find ourselves in a death trap."

"Eh? Eh?" said Jack, looking up at him in no little surprise.

"Yes, pard; and we are sent here to watch and see that they don't make such a move without letting General Shafter know it."

"Great Scott, pard! is that what General Wheeler sent you here for?"

"Yes. Just think of it, Jack; our line is long and thin, facing Santiago on the left, El Caney on the north side, and these fellows away out here on the right. Now, suppose that those regiments out there should quietly filter through the woods, pass in behind our boys, cross the Siboney road and close in on them. Just see the death-trap they would be in. If the Spaniards should then come out of Santiago and El Caney they'd have our boys completely surrounded, and that too, when they were utterly exhausted from lack of sleep, shelter and food. I tell you, Jack, it makes me shudder to think of the consequences; it would be the bloodiest fight and the most disastrous one in our whole history, and our brave fellows, including Wheeler, Roosevelt, Kent, and perhaps Shafter, would meet the fate of Custer when the redskins closed in on him."

"Pard," said Jack, rising to his feet, "it looks as though the fate of our army depends upon us two out here in these woods."

"That's pretty much the size of it, Jack, hence you see how necessary it is that we should be watchful."

"Yes, yes," assented the cowboy; "I'm glad that fellow got away, as we now won't have to watch him."

"That's it," returned Yankee Doodle, "but if he should prove treacherous and manage to encompass our capture, we might live to regret that we didn't kill him."

"Oh, he was unarmed; we couldn't kill him."

"Very true, and that would be the irony of fate if our mission goes wrong."

From the wooded height where the two boys stood, protected by the dense foliage of the great trees, they had a splendid view of the country for several miles down the river to where it emptied into the Bay of Guantanamo. Away in the distance could be seen several vessels of the American fleet holding full possession of the lower part of the bay.

About a thousand marines had been landed on the shores of the bay for two or three weeks, where they had fortified themselves and repeatedly repulsed attacks by the enemy.

The situation was rather peculiar, as the American vessels could not enter the narrow channel of the river to attack the city of Guantanamo, without getting in such close range of the Spanish fortifications on shore that would cause the destruction, perhaps, of several of the vessels. As it was a city of considerable importance the Spanish force seemed determined to hold it, and the Americans had no sway beyond the range of their guns.

While they were there looking on, the boom of several ships in the bay was borne to them far over the hills, and only now and then could the faint sound of the rattle of small arms be heard.

"They keep it up all the time down there," remarked Jack.

"So they do; but it is strange the mistakes made by those Spanish officers. They are wasting precious time in simply holding a small force of Americans in check. A Napoleon, or a Wellington, a Grant or a Lee, would make a sudden change, sweep around to the rear of Wheeler, drive him against the breastworks of El Caney and Santiago, grind him to powder, and then hurl the whole weight of the Spanish army upon Shafter down at the seashore, and thus utterly wipe out the army of invasion. But they don't seem to know how to do it. There are eight to ten thousand seasoned, disciplined soldiers, lying out there before us, and it is extremely doubtful if they have yet found out anything about the battle of San Juan Hill, yet it occurred three days ago and within ten or twelve miles of them."

"Oh well, pard," said Jack, "Spain has been falling behind for centuries, and her pace gets slower and slower all the time."

Hours passed and the day waned. The two young Americans looked around them, and asked themselves the question where they should spend the night.

"This is as good a place as we can find, pard," said Jack, "for up here we can see every camp-fire of the enemy, and as our rations are already cooked we shall have no need to make a fire ourselves."

"But what shall we do for water, pard?"

"Water? There is never a lack of water on the

highest mountain in Cuba during the rainy season; all we'll have to do is take a leaf, make a funnel of it and when that confounded midnight rain begins to fall, we can stand out in it, put the funnel to our mouths and get filled to overflowing inside of ten minutes."

"So we could, but I don't propose to make a cistern of myself that way."

"All right then, we can cut a few leaves, make a shed to turn the water, and pin a few leaves together to catch all we want to drink."

"That's what we'll do then," and they set to work with their knives, cut a few limbs and gathered the broad leaves of a certain kind of palm, with which they made a shed that turned the water equal to a duck's back.

By the time they had finished it night came on, and in less than twenty minutes it was as dark as it would be any time between then and daylight.

They have no twilight in the tropics, for when the sun goes down it is like turning off a gas jet, and darkness follows immediately. The stars twinkled brightly overhead, and away down below them where the Spanish regiments were in camp a thousand camp-fires blazed.

They were so high up that the breeze blew the mosquitoes away, and they were not troubled during the night by any insects at all. But about midnight the clouds began to gather, the thunder rumbled through the mountains with a roar that would put thirteen-inch guns to shame. Then the rain began to come down in huge drops that pattered on the leaves like bullets or gravel stones, and for more than two hours it roared all around them. But the shelter they had improvised turned the water so thoroughly they managed to keep perfectly dry as they sat there, and listened to the warring elements. Then it ceased as suddenly as it began, the clouds broke away and again the stars came out twinkling as brightly as before.

But for many minutes after they could hear the roar of the many torrents splashing down the sides of the mountains. Even that ceased by and by and then a profound silence reigned, during which they stretched themselves out on their blankets and slept soundly until sunrise.

"How quiet and peaceful everything seems, pard," said Jack, as he arose to his feet and looked out upon the beautiful panorama spread out before him.

"Yes," returned Yankee Doodle, as he drank in the scene; "I'm sorry we haven't a camera so that we could take the picture back with us; but we are not likely ever to forget it however long we may live."

They breakfasted on their rations, after which they drank copiously of the water caught in their leaf cup, and were then ready to resume their scouting observations.

They descended the mountain in the direction of the road which they had crossed late in the afternoon of the previous day, where they intended to conceal

themselves in the thicket and keep a strict watch on passing bodies of soldiers.

After an hour's tramp they struck the road, which they examined carefully to see if anybody had passed that morning, as they well knew that the rain of the night before had entirely obliterated any tracks made there the day before.

That done, they concealed themselves in a thicket by the roadside to wait and watch. They well knew that the road led down in the direction of Caimenera, and that if the Spaniards really intended to make any move so as to get in behind of the American army in front of El Caney, they would have to go by that route.

They had been in the thicket nearly an hour when the sounds of horses' hoofs in the road coming up from below were heard. In a little while about a dozen horsemen appeared, escorting a couple of officers whose brilliant uniforms told that they were men of considerable rank.

They passed at a brisk pace going in the direction of Guantanamo. A bend in the road a couple of hundred yards to the right soon shut off the view of the passing cavalymen.

They had been gone but a few minutes when others were heard coming, and when they appeared in sight they proved to be three other officers with a dozen soldiers escorting three ladies on horseback.

They too were going in the direction of the city, and the lively conversation that was kept up by the three women told that they were neither prisoners nor in a state of apprehension.

"They all seem to be going one way, pard," whispered Jack to Yankee Doodle.

"Yes, they are going into the city, and it really means nothing to us."

By and by they saw a couple of Spanish soldiers coming in the opposite direction, who were unarmed save with revolvers. They were on foot, and were conversing in low tones as they walked along the road.

Just as they arrived opposite the thicket in which Jack and Yankee Doodle were concealed the sound of horses' hoofs was heard coming along the road behind them. They came to a sudden halt, listened for a few minutes and then darted into the thicket, where they stopped within a few feet of Yankee Doodle and Jack.

But they turned their backs to the two Americans and eagerly watched the road to see who it was that was coming from the city. It proved to be a party of cavalry of seven men led by a sergeant. They were going at such a speed as to convince Jack and Yankee Doodle that they were pursuing the two soldiers that were standing there so close by them.

As they dashed past one of the hiding soldiers nudged his comrade, and remarked:

"It's the sergeant."

"Yes," said the other, "and we'll be shot if he catches us. We must leave the road and take to the woods on the other side."

In less than a couple of minutes' time the little

party of cavalry had swept by and were out of sight, and before Jack and Yankee Doodle could make up their minds to accost the two soldiers they dashed across the road and disappeared in the woods beyond.

"Let 'em go!" whispered Yankee Doodle. "We don't want to bother with them."

"I guess they are deserters," returned Jack, "and look as hungry as any of Garcia's men."

"Maybe they are," assented the other, "but I can't see why they should be hungry at Guantanamo, for there is nothing in the world to prevent their getting all the fruit they want in this vicinity, as the country north of the city is the most fertile in Cuba."

"Oh, I guess they've pretty well cleaned it out by this time, and none but the officers can get a square meal. I'm glad, though, that they didn't run into us, for they might have made trouble for us."

Hour after hour passed, during which time several parties went to and fro along the road, a number of whom were Cubans who seemed to be on the verge of starvation. Two stalwart blacks were seen creeping along in the edge of the bushes on the opposite side of the road each armed with a machete. They disappeared in a clump of bushes about fifty yards further down the road.

Jack was engaged in watching them, and when he could no longer see them he remarked to Yankee Doodle that he thought they had stopped in that thicket down there on the other side.

"Keep your eye on the thicket, then, and if they have stopped there we may hear from them. I'm inclined to think they are insurgents, who are either scouting for Garcia or else prowling around on their own hook for what they can pick up."

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT OUR HEROES SAW FROM THE THICKET BY THE ROADSIDE—THE CAPTURED DISPATCH.

ABOUT half an hour or so after the two Cubans disappeared in the bushes, a cart was seen coming along the road, driven by an old man, whose diminutive mule seemed scarcely able to drag the load along.

Jack was watching him, solely because there was nothing else in sight at the moment to attract his attention. Yankee Doodle was farther back in the thicket, leaving Jack to do the watching.

Suddenly Jack called to him:

"Come quick, pard!"

Yankee Doodle sprang to his side, and peered out through the bushes in the direction Jack was looking. There he saw that the two Cubans had dashed out into the road, and while one of them was menacing the driver with his machete, the other was helping himself to the contents of the cart. The driver was protesting vigorously, notwithstanding the machete that was waving over his head.

But he had to submit, and when the one who was rifling the cart had lifted out a bag and disappeared in the thicket with it, his comrade quickly followed

him, leaving the old man on the cart wringing his hands and filling the air with Spanish objurgations.

"That's tough, pard," remarked Jack; "the old fellow was probably going to market with a few things for sale and has been cleaned out."

"Yes," assented Yankee Doodle, "it's tough, and from the way the old fellow is going on it must be a great loss to him."

"So it must be; but I guess it's a case of dog eat dog, for I've been in Cuba long enough to find out that the whole tribe of those black fellows are a worthless lot."

"Of course they are. So is the tribe the world over; still, for all that, I don't like to see a man robbed in that sort of way, and if we were not in the position that we are, I would have scorched those two fellows with a bullet."

"Hold on, pard," said Jack, "there are more coming—and from the city this time."

They stepped back farther in the bushes where they were well concealed by the thick foliage, but at the same time were enabled to see anything that passed along the road.

This time it was another party of horsemen. There were several officers who were followed by nearly a score of cavalymen. As soon as the officers came in sight Jack gave Yankee Doodle a nudge with his elbow that forced a grunt out of him.

"What is the matter with you?" he asked in a whisper.

"Look quick!" said Jack.

He pushed his way forward a little bit to catch a good view of the new-comers, and was dumfounded at seeing their late prisoner mounted on a splendid charger leading the party with an officer on either side of him in brilliant uniform. He wore himself what is known in military circles as undress uniform. He sat erect in the saddle like an experienced horseman, and had the bearing of a field marshal.

That he was the master spirit of the party and one high in authority would have been impressed upon the mind of even an unsophisticated countryman. As he rode by he was seen conversing quietly with the officer on his right.

When they came up to where the old Cuban and his cart almost completely blockaded the road, the cavalcade came to a halt. The next moment two of the private soldiers leaped from their horses, ran around to the front, seized the bit of the old Cuban's mule, and led him into the bushes.

The party then swept on, and the two soldiers sprang into their saddles and followed. As soon as they had passed, the old Cuban led his mule out into the road and turned his head in the direction he had come. He was going back home, as he had nothing with which to go to market.

"Say, pard," whispered Yankee Doodle, "what do you think of that?"

"I don't know what to think, Jack, for I never was as much puzzled before in my life. I'd give my rifle to know who that fellow is, for it is evident that he is

a man of high position, but whether in the army or in the civil service I'm blest if I know. We made a mistake in letting him get away from us."

"So we did, pard," assented Jack, "but had we attempted to hold him, and yet keep him along with us, it might have resulted in our capture."

"Very true," assented Yankee Doodle, "but until I find out who he is I'll not be able to think much about anything else."

"Oh, maybe we'll find out yet, as we may be able to capture somebody who knows him, and then when we do we'll probably spend the rest of our lives kicking ourselves for not holding on to him."

"All the same, I'm willing to chance that."

The next hour they spent there near the city was of absorbing interest, for a company of cavalry passed on down the road in the direction taken by the Unknown, and they had scarcely disappeared around the bend in the road when the two again heard the boom of guns far down in the bay.

The distance was great, but yet the great guns were plainly heard. They suspected that the Unknown and the officers with him had some connection with it. The cannonading was continued for half an hour, and guns of different caliber were easily distinguished by the volume of sound. The distance was too great, however, for small arms to be heard, but Yankee Doodle and Jack suspected that the marines on shore were being attacked, and that the vessels in the bay were shelling the Spaniards.

At the end of half an hour the sound of the great guns ceased. Another half hour passed, and another squad of cavalry passed along the road going down in the direction taken by the Unknown and his party. At the same moment another party was heard coming up from below, and the other instantly halted and lined up along the roadside directly opposite the thicket in which our two heroes were concealed.

A few minutes later the party from below appeared in sight, and it proved to be the Unknown, who had passed more than an hour before. As he appeared in sight the cavalry lined up by the roadside, instantly saluted, and the Unknown returned it with the complacency of a field marshal. He moved on at a brisk canter, and was soon out of sight.

The officers in command of the cavalry gave the order to about face, march, and the next moment they galloped off up the road in the wake of the mysterious Unknown and his party.

"Say, pard," said Jack, "I'm jiggered."

"It's worse than that, Jack," said Yankee Doodle, "we're both euchered, and no matter how long we may live we don't want to say anything about this matter, because if we do we'll be called tenderfeet forever after."

"I feel that way too, pard," said Jack. "The fact is I feel too mean to look at myself in a mirror if I had one. When you told him he was a high cockalorum you hit it just right."

"I was just a bit suspicious of it at the time, Jack, but as I had nothing tangible upon which to base it I

wouldn't say anything about it. He may be the commander-in-chief at Guantanamo, and having pledged his word to us not to set any soldiers on our trail he seems to be keeping it like a man."

"Yes, I was just thinking of that, for he certainly must know that we are still somewhere in this vicinity."

"Of course he does, and that too after I told him we were here to watch the Spaniards."

"I was surprised at that," said Jack, "when I heard you do it, but at the same time it seemed to be all right, since you were denying the accusation of being a spy."

The greater part of the day was spent in the thicket by the roadside, after which they decided to spend the night in the same place on top of the mountain, which overlooked the city and Spanish camp, as they felt quite sure of being out of the way of any prowling scouting parties of the enemy in that place.

They accordingly returned to that spot, where they again sat down and gazed at the panorama which lay spread out before them, until the sun went down and night closed in about them. Then again they witnessed the light of hundreds of camp-fires, and lay down to sleep under the shelter they had provided the night before.

Again they passed a peaceful, quiet night, and early the next morning decided to return to the roadside and watch there for a while, after which they would try to make their way around in the direction of the city.

"Jack," said Yankee Doodle to his comrade, in a low tone of voice, "I was thinking last night that our unknown prisoner passed along the road here yesterday, in company with officers, as much to let us see him as anything else."

"Why do you think so, pard?" Jack asked him.

"Why, if you recollect, when he passed here he returned in about an hour."

"Yes," assented Jack.

"Well, during that time, unless he rode a great deal faster than he did when passing us, he couldn't have gone more than three miles."

"Well, what of that?"

"I was thinking this, that the place where the fighting was done yesterday down on the shore of the bay is twice as far as that from here, so he must have turned around and come back without reaching there, hence he didn't make the trip for the purpose of taking any part in the fight."

"Well, I don't see what that has to do with it," said Jack, "nor can I understand why he should want to show himself to us in that sort of way."

"Neither do I, but yet it looks to me as though he did. What his motive was I don't know; the truth is it is a confounded puzzle anyway."

"Well, I agree with you on that, pard, and it may be that he just wanted to show us how we missed it when we let him get away. But the greatest puzzle to me is the fact that he has not attempted to capture us."

"Well, I guess his promise to us accounts for that."

"It may be so, pard," assented Jack, "but all the same I don't take much stock in promises from any Spanish source; nor from anybody of Spanish descent or whose native language is in that tongue."

Yankee Doodle laughed and remarked:

"You seem to have a prejudice against the language, Jack."

"I guess I have, pard, for I spent ten years in Arizona and New Mexico among the greasers who speak nothing but Spanish mixed with a little English, and I have yet to see a man who ever found anything to admire in the mental or moral make-up of a Mexican greaser."

Suddenly they were startled by hearing footsteps coming along the road, and Yankee Doodle motioned to Jack to be silent.

Jack instantly hushed up, and the two listened until three Spanish soldiers appeared in sight coming along the road, armed with Mausers, and provided with well-filled haversacks. They marched by with a rather rapid gait and in profound silence. Not a word were they heard to utter as long as they were in sight.

When they had disappeared down the road Jack remarked:

"That's a heavy reinforcement, pard, sent to smash the marines down on the shore of the bay."

"Yes," said Yankee Doodle, "we ought to warn our friends of their danger."

"Oh, we can't warn everybody, pard. Those marines down there can take care of themselves, for they are under the guns of the war-ships; it's the fellows in front of El Caney that we are to look out for."

"You're right about that," returned Yankee Doodle, "and we must keep that in view all the time."

In a little while they saw a courier dash by on horseback going up the road in the direction of the city. He was going at full speed and his horse was covered with foam.

"That's a hurry call," remarked Jack.

"Yes, it looks like it; and we'll wait and see what follows."

In less than thirty minutes another courier dashed by, going in the same direction and at about the same rate of speed on a foam covered horse.

"They come from the scene of yesterday's fight," remarked Yankee Doodle, "some six or seven miles away, and their horses show the effect of the hard run."

A couple of hours passed and then they heard a roar of rushing cavalry from the direction of the city. They got back a little farther in the thicket to avoid any possibility of discovery and waited.

A few minutes later the head of a cavalry column appeared in sight and went dashing down the road with a thunderous roar. They were some time in passing, for they were several hundred strong.

"Reinforcements," said Jack, when the column had passed.

"Yes, it is evidently in response to a call for help. We will wait and see if any infantry passes."

A half hour passed; a party of officers dashed by at full speed, and a few moments later the guns on the ships down in the bay were heard. For fully three hours their steady boom reverberated through the mountains.

Then couriers were seen dashing by going back to the city.

"Say, Jack," said Yankee Doodle, "we ought to catch one of those fellows and find out what is up."

"Maybe he wouldn't tell us," replied Jack.

"Oh, we wouldn't depend on that; we could read his dispatches."

"All right," said Jack, "we'll stop the next one," but they waited nearly an hour before another courier was heard coming.

They both sprang to the roadside and looked up and down to see if any one else was in sight. They saw no one but the courier, who was coming at the top of his horse's speed. When he was within about fifty feet of them they both sprang out into the middle of the road, and called out in Spanish:

"Halt!"

Instead of doing so the courier laid forward on his horse's neck, dashed passed them like a thunderbolt, and was at least fifty yards beyond them ere he straightened up in the saddle again and looked back over his shoulder.

Quick as a flash Jack raised his rifle, aimed quickly and fired. The courier tumbled out of the saddle, shot through the head, whilst the steed dashed on and disappeared around the bend of the road.

"Come on quick, Jack!" said Yankee Doodle, running at the top of his speed; "we must get him into the bushes before he is seen by any one else."

Jack followed and reached the dead courier with him. They quickly dragged the body into the bushes some twenty or thirty paces distant from the roadside.

There Jack hastily made search for papers. He finally found one on which was written in Spanish with a pencil, addressed to the commandant at Guantanamo, these words:

"We have the enemy surrounded on three sides; with another regiment we can capture them in spite of the fire from the ships, which is doing us but little harm. (Signed) LOPEZ SILVA,

"Colonel commanding."

When Jack read the dispatch to Yankee Doodle the latter remarked:

"I guess it's hot work down there, Jack, but I don't see that we can do anything for our boys, whatever."

"I don't know about that, pard. We might let them know that another regiment has been sent for; it might save them the lives of a good many men."

Yankee Doodle was silent for a few moments and then said:

"You may be right, Jack, and I guess it won't interfere with our work if we take the news down there to them. So come ahead, we'll try it anyway," and leaving the body of the dead courier there in the woods near the road, they started off in a southerly direction, keeping well in the bushes to avoid being seen by parties coming or going.

Naturally that mode of traveling was necessarily slow, but in a couple of hours they reached a point whence they could see the ships shelling the woods where the Spaniards were firing on the marines.

The position of the Americans could be easily traced by the smoke from their guns, whereas the smokeless powder used by the Spaniards rendered it impossible for their position to be located.

"Pard," said Jack, "we can see where our boys are, and can only guess where the Spaniards are located. It is safe to say that they are right out on their front, and we have got to make our way farther down until we can turn the Spanish flank on the right and go in behind the marines."

"Just what I was thinking," said Yankee Doodle, and they hurried forward with all possible speed.

The sun was oppressively hot, but the two pushed on, keeping well under the shade of the trees as much for the protection afforded them from the rays of the sun, as from the enemy.

Half an hour later they had reached a point where they could turn and make the rear of the position held by the American marines.

CHAPTER V.

THE MYSTERIOUS UNKNOWN AGAIN.

As they started to make the rear of the position held by the marines on the hill, a shell from one of the ships went shrieking over their heads so close as to cause them both to throw themselves flat on the ground. But it passed on and exploded a quarter of a mile away on the hill back of them.

"I hope that knocked over a few, pard," Jack remarked, as he rose to his feet again.

"You can bet it did," said Yankee Doodle, "if it hit any of them."

Several shells passed over their heads after that, but they wasted no more time trying to dodge them. They pushed on half a mile farther, and caught up with a party of marines who were carrying ammunition to the men on the hill.

"Where'll I find the colonel in command?" Yankee Doodle asked one of them.

"I don't know," was the reply; "but he's with the boys up on the hill there where the Mauser bullets are singing like crickets."

They pushed on up the hill, making inquiry of everyone they met.

Finally they met a lieutenant of marines who was wounded in the left arm. Yankee Doodle saluted him, and said:

"Lieutenant, I'm looking for the colonel. We have captured a dispatch sent to the Spanish commander

at Guantanamo, which we think the colonel should see at once."

"He is over that way," said the lieutenant, pointing off to the right, "on the firing line, and the only way to find him is to hunt for him."

They started off through the thicket of scrub palm, where minie-balls were whistling all around and over them. They saw many wounded and a few dead marines, and at last ran up against the colonel, who was using a rifle like a private.

"Are you the colonel?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Yes!" was the sharp reply, as the officer turned quickly and looked at him.

"Well, here's a dispatch that I think you ought to see," and Yankee Doodle handed it over to him.

He took the paper and glanced over it, and remarked:

"What is it? It is all Greek to me."

"It's Spanish," replied Yankee Doodle, and in a few words explained how he came in possession of it.

"Well, all the Spanish that I can understand," remarked the colonel, "is a few cuss words. Read it to me."

"Here, Jack," called Yankee Doodle, "read this to the colonel at once."

Jack read the dispatch and translated it to him, and for a few moments the officer looked grave.

"You say you got this from a Spanish courier?" he asked.

"Yes, colonel; we had to shoot him out of the saddle to get it."

"Where were you at the time?"

"We were fully six miles up the road in the rear of the force now in your front."

"Who sent you over there, for you are not a marine?"

"I was sent there by General Wheeler, who is now in front of Santiago."

A look of incredulity came into the colonel's face, which Jack was quick to notice.

"Colonel," said the cowboy, "this is Yankee Doodle, and I guess you have heard of him."

"Thunder! Yes!" exclaimed the colonel; "we've all heard of him," and he gave Yankee Doodle a keen, searching glance, after which he extended his hand to him, saying:

"It's all right, my boy. That's all I wanted to know. So they are trying to get in my rear, are they?"

"It seems so, colonel," replied Yankee Doodle; "and if they send the reinforcements asked for, they can't be very far behind us."

"But how can they send the reinforcements?" the colonel asked, "since they didn't get this dispatch?"

"Oh, nearly a dozen other couriers passed before and after this one, but we don't know what they were after. We thought it best to bring this to you that you might be posted."

"You did right, my boy, and I'll be prepared for them whether they come or not," and with that he turned and went in search of the major, who was a

little further along on his left. They soon found him, and the two boys heard him instruct the major to hold the lines at all hazards after which he turned and went the other way, followed by Yankee Doodle and Jack.

He passed on to the right of his line, where he ordered two companies, numbering about one hundred and fifty marines, to follow him down the hill. When they reached the foot of it, there was another hill in his front that shut off the view of the ships in the bay.

"Captain," he said to the officer in command of one of the companies, "I have news that the enemy is going to attempt to get in behind us, and the only way they can do it is to push up through this hollow between these two hills, as they wouldn't dare attempt it either on top or the other side of that hill, for over there they would be exposed to the fire from the ships. You must hold this place against any force that may appear."

"All right, colonel," answered the captain, "we will do our best."

"Captain," said Yankee Doodle, "my comrade here and myself would be glad to fight with you; may we do so?"

"Who are you, and where do you belong?" the captain asked.

"They are all right, captain," said the colonel, before either of the two could answer. "That young man is Yankee Doodle, sent over here by General Wheeler to watch the enemy. Let them fight wherever they want to."

"All right," answered the captain; "glad to have them."

The colonel then turned and made his way up over the hill to the firing line. Over an hour passed, during which time Yankee Doodle conversed with the captain and the other officers, telling them of his and Jack's adventures over on the Guantanamo road, but they were careful to make no mention of their meeting with the Unknown, who was still a mystery to them. Every man of the marines soon heard that the famous Yankee Doodle was there with them, and evinced a great curiosity to see him and speak to him.

By and by it became evident that the Spaniards were pushing their way up the ravine between the two hills.

"Steady, men!" cried the senior captain, "the Spaniards are coming, and we must see to it that they don't get past this point."

A few minutes later Jack caught a glimpse of several of the Spaniards about a hundred yards away, dodging about among the palmettos. He raised his rifle and fired quickly.

"That got him!" exclaimed several marines, who saw the Spaniard drop.

Then the fight opened, and Mauser bullets flew through the bushes thick as hail. Several of the marines were hit, but they returned the fire with a steadiness that seemed to bother the enemy.

Then the Spaniards made a rush to carry the posi-

tion and swarm in behind the Americans, holding the crest of the hill. As they did so they exposed themselves to the deadly aim of the Americans at short range, and in less than ten minutes nearly one hundred of them were knocked over, killed or wounded.

Jack and Yankee Doodle stood and fired with great rapidity, never missing a man.

Just then the senior captain was wounded and taken to the rear. Then the two lieutenants went down, one of whom was instantly killed. The Spaniards pushed on as though determined to carry the position by force of numbers.

"Pard," said Jack to Yankee Doodle, "I believe every officer of this company is down, and if the men find it out they may give way."

"That would never do," returned Yankee Doodle. "Jack, we must charge."

"Great Scott, pard!" returned Jack, "they are too many for us."

"Not a bit of it; a charge is something the Spaniards can't stand; we saw that at San Juan Hill."

The next moment Yankee Doodle raised his voice above the din and rattle of the Mausers and American rifles, calling out to the marines:

"Now, men, let's get at them! Just mix right in with them and give them the revolver at close quarters!" and with that he and Jack dashed forward, and every marine who was on his feet followed with a yell.

The Spaniards outnumbered them two to one, but they were so dumfounded at the sudden and unexpected advance of the Americans they delivered one volley and broke and fled.

As they ran scores of them were exposed to the fire of the marines, who were quick to let them have it. It created a panic amongst them and they went tearing through the bushes like rabbits chased by dogs.

"There they go!" cried Yankee Doodle, and the next moment Jack gave an old-fashioned American cheer that was taken up by the marines and sent roaring over the hills to their comrades on the firing line.

The colonel up there understood it, and knew that the enemy had been repulsed. Soon the news came to him by courier telling him of the results of the fight, and he ordered the whole firing line to advance, which they did, cheering as they went.

That ended the fight. The enemy was repulsed all along the line, after having suffered heavy losses. The marines at once devoted themselves to carrying in their wounded and dead, during which time the colonel met Yankee Doodle and Jack and told them that the timely warning they had brought to him had undoubtedly saved his command from disaster.

"That is just what I tried to do, colonel," replied Yankee Doodle, "and besides that we managed to get mixed up in it in a way that just suited us, and I'll bet there are more dead Spaniards down there in that hollow than anywhere else in this neighborhood, for we got right in amongst them with the revolver,

making it so hot for them that they ran like rabbits."

The two spent the night in camp with the marines, where they were drenched by a downpour of rain at midnight, not being able to find shelter. But the next morning the hot sun dried their clothes, after which they proceeded to make their way back up the road in the direction of Guantanamo.

Several times they came within an ace of running into a party of Spaniards who were prowling about through the woods near the road, which had the effect to make them extremely cautious in their movements. More than once they were near enough to hear them talking. They spoke of the fight as a hot one, and that the American pigs were undoubtedly good fighters.

"Pard," whispered Jack to Yankee Doodle, "they got it in the neck down there."

"I should say they did," was the reply, "and they don't try to conceal the fact from themselves at least."

The two kept near the road but yet under the cover of the bushes to avoid being seen by straggling parties of Spaniards, and in due time reached the vicinity of where they had captured the dispatch which was sent to the Spanish commander at Guantanamo.

There they decided to wait a while, eat their noon-day meal and then push on up the road in the direction of the city. After a couple of hours' wait they started off, and had gone about a mile when they heard the sound of horsemen on the road ahead of them.

Slipping into the bushes on their right, they quietly waited for the horsemen to pass. They proved to be a small party of cavalry led by a non-commissioned officer, which soon passed out of sight and hearing. They were about to resume their journey when they heard footsteps in the thicket directly behind them.

They both wheeled with hands on their revolvers, very much astonished at hearing anyone approach from that quarter. To their utter amazement their late prisoner, the mysterious Unknown, appeared, and on seeing them smiled, saying:

"You are still here, senors?"

"Yes, senor," replied Yankee Doodle, "but we were on the point of leaving when we heard your footsteps."

"It seems to me you have lingered rather long in this vicinity," remarked the Unknown.

"We have found it very interesting, senor," said Yankee Doodle.

"So I suppose, and without incurring much danger, either."

"I'm not sure of that," was the reply, "for we have had to exercise extreme caution to avoid being discovered."

"Quite natural," returned the other; "at the same time you have doubtless been quite active."

"Well, we haven't been idle," confessed Yankee Doodle.

"No, you were in the fight yesterday down on the shore of the bay."

"So we were, and a pretty lively fight it was. We returned from there this morning."

"Permit me to suggest to you, Senor Americano," said the Unknown, "that in view of the death of the courier and the loss of the dispatch he was bearing to the city, this place will soon become entirely too hot for you, and that if you would escape alive you had better leave this vicinity without delay."

"Why do you tell us that, senor?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Simply because I would be pained to hear of your being taken and shot."

"And why should that pain you, since we are enemies?"

"Personally we are not enemies, senor."

"Thank you," said Yankee Doodle, "I am glad to hear that, for you have expressed my own sentiments."

"Thank you, senor; you will remember that I promised not to reveal your presence in this vicinity to the Spanish authorities, and I have kept my word. But the death of the courier and the loss of the dispatch has satisfied the military commandant that either American or insurgent bands are in this vicinity, and orders have been issued that the woods be scoured in search of them."

"But why do you tell us this, senor?" Yankee Doodle again asked.

"I do so that you may not think I have failed in my promise to you. You will, therefore, understand that I am in no way responsible for what has happened, nor have I mentioned to any one that you have been seen in this vicinity."

"I believe you, senor," said Yankee Doodle, "but at our former meeting you claimed to be a civilian, and in consideration of that fact we treated you as a non-combatant, but what we have since seen we are at a loss to understand how your statement can be true, for we have seen you treated by officers and soldiers as one high in command."

"Nevertheless, senor, I assure you that I am not a soldier, but have the good fortune to be regarded as a man of some prominence and influence, and have tried to so conduct myself as to merit the good will and confidence of men and officers alike."

"Of that I am fully persuaded," remarked Yankee Doodle, "yet had we met you in any other way than this present meeting we certainly would take you with us to our line as a prisoner of war. As it is, honor forbids such a proceeding on our part."

"Very true, senor, and I perceive that I had not misjudged you when I made up my mind to come out and see you to-day. There are other reasons for my conduct which I cannot make known to you, but perhaps a few weeks or a month, at farthest, you will understand many things which now seem mysterious to you. I am a Spaniard, as you doubtless know, and loyal to Spain in every sense of the term. But I foresee things which are utterly incomprehensible to my

countrymen, one of which I do not hesitate to tell you, for the reason that you know not who I am or have the least suspicion of my identity, and that is this: that the cause of Spain in Cuba is hopelessly lost. My countrymen, both here and in Spain, are loath to admit it, and but few of them really foresee it. My one great desire at this time is to see my country emerge from this war without any loss to her honor or military prestige. To be defeated in battle is no loss of honor, and the tremendous preponderance of power on the American side also saves us the loss of military prestige. We shall lose Cuba with as little loss to us as possible, and retire with the honors of war. How that will be done I cannot explain to you, but when it is done you will understand. You have been sent here by your general to watch the Spanish force at Guantanamo. He is a born soldier and an able general, for he well understands that if the force at this point should be hurled upon his rear it would be all over with him and his command. It would inflict great loss upon both sides, but would benefit Spain nothing whatever, save in the matter of military prestige, even to destroy the whole American army in front of Santiago; the end would be the same either way, for your great nation has unlimited resources in men, money and arms, against which Spain struggles without hope. So you can return to your army, if you choose to do so, with the assurance of one who fully understands all about that of which he speaks, that the movement feared by your general will never be made."

CHAPTER VI.

TRAILED THROUGH THE WOODS—JACK CARRIES NEWS TO WHEELER.

YANKEE DOODLE and Jack looked at each other in utter amazement after the Unknown had ceased speaking. That such a communication should be made to them by one evidently high in authority seemed incredible.

Both of them had a pretty well developed belief that diplomacy and duplicity had always been potent weapons in the hands of Spaniards. The thought flashed through their minds as they stood there in the presence of the Unknown, that they were to be made victims of that sort of warfare by the mysterious personage to whom they had just been listening.

The Unknown seemed to divine what was passing through their minds, and a smile spread over his face, as he remarked:

"I perceive that you doubt the truth of what I have just said to you, senor."

"I confess it, senor," said Yankee Doodle, with a blunt frankness typical of the soldier.

"I knew it," remarked the other. "Nevertheless I indulge a hope that you may both escape the casualties of battle and live to be convinced of the truth of what I have just said to you. You are certainly intelligent enough to understand that even the destruction of your army before Santiago de Cuba can have no effect whatever on the final result, save to

make matters worse to Spain. Should this army at Guantanamo be suddenly hurled upon your rear at San Juan hill and El Caney, (and there is nothing in the world to prevent us from doing so,) the effect would be to so encourage my countrymen that they would make renewed efforts, and prolong a war the result of which is inevitable—their total defeat and ruin."

"Yes, senor; I can understand that. The United States can send one, two, three, or five hundred thousand soldiers to Cuba if it is necessary to do so, while Spain cannot. But her government knew all that before the declaration of war."

"The government? Yes, but the people of Spain did not, and when we were asked to pull down our flag and get out of Cuba, the indignation of the Spanish people was so great the government could not resist it. We were forced to declare war in order to satisfy the people at home and thus preserve the dynasty."

Yankee Doodle was about to make further reply, when he was interrupted by Jack, who suddenly whispered to him:

"Pard, we must get away! The woods are full of Spaniards looking for us."

He spoke in English, but the Unknown evidently understood what he said, for he remarked quickly:

"It is true, senor, and you cannot make your escape too soon. You will pardon me if I leave you at once," and with that he disappeared in a thick clump of bushes on his right.

"Come, pard," said Jack, "let us get across the road as quick as we can."

They dashed in the direction of the road, which was but thirty or forty paces away, and on reaching it darted across and disappeared in the thicket on the farther side.

Loud shouts and half a dozen rifle shots from the road a hundred yards above told them that they had been seen.

"Come ahead, pard," said Jack, leading the way; "keep right behind me and we'll beat those fellows yet."

Knowing that Jack was a skilled woodsman as well as a plainsman, Yankee Doodle followed him with most implicit confidence in his skill and judgment. They pushed straight on ahead in a westerly direction until they were more than a mile from the road in which they had been seen. Then Jack stopped and listened.

"We are all right now, pard," said he, "for unless they understand trailing in the woods they won't get a hundred yards away from the roadside while hunting for us."

"Well, that's all right," said Yankee Doodle; "I know very well that it is a very difficult matter to find people in the woods, and I guess they know it as well. But what do you think of that fellow, Jack?"

"He's a puzzler and a mystery," Jack answered.

"He is all that and more," assented Yankee Doodle, "for he is evidently one high in authority not only in Cuba but in Spain. Still for all that what he

told us staggers me, for I cannot understand why he should have said such things to two private American soldiers such as we are."

"Oh, I can understand that," said Jack. "He knew that we did not know who he was and that were we to repeat what he said to us no sane person would believe it, hence in either case he was safe."

Yankee Doodle shook his head, saying:

"That may satisfy you, Jack, but it doesn't go with me. Look at it from any standpoint I may I can't shake off the suspicion that he gave us that yarn for the purpose of getting us out of the way so as to enable the Spanish army at Guantanamo to double up on General Wheeler in front of Santiago."

"Well," returned Jack, "if I thought that, pard, I'd stay here in the woods and watch him."

"That's just what we've got to do, Jack, and even then if we catch him making a move we can't hope to get ahead of him but a few short hours. The risk is so great that I'm not willing to take the responsibility of returning to General Wheeler until I am better satisfied than I now am that such a movement will not be made. I am all the more suspicious from the fact that the Unknown himself spoke of such a movement, and that shows that it had been contemplated by the Spanish generals."

"Then we'll stay here, pard," remarked Jack, "until we do find out to our satisfaction just what they mean to do."

"Of course," assented Yankee Doodle, "and now what we want is a drink of water and something to eat. We've got food, but the water we must hunt for."

They lost little time in hunting for water, for down at the foot of the hill on which they had stopped to discuss the situation they discovered a small stream of running water.

"This shows that there is a spring above here somewhere, and if we follow it, we'll soon find it."

They went up the ravine two or three hundred yards, where they found a spring, the source of the little stream. They sat down by it, ate their rations and quenched their thirst, after which they discussed their plans for the coming night.

They finally decided on spending the night where they were, and the next day make their way back to the road to the very place where they had last met the Unknown.

"They have searched the woods about there, Jack, and if they keep up the hunt it will be elsewhere."

"Very likely," assented Jack, "but all the same we must be very shy of being seen."

They proceeded to make a shelter of palm leaves to turn the heavy downpour of rain which they knew would come at midnight, and when they had finished the structure the sun was not half an hour high.

Yankee Doodle arranged a bed of leaves while he yet had light enough to do so, and was about to lie down to rest, when Jack gave a sudden start, exclaiming:

"Up, pard, quick! Here they come!" and he

pointed in the direction of the ravine where they saw five Spanish soldiers following an old Cuban, who was doing the trailing for them.

Quick as a flash Jack raised his rifle and fired, and the old Cuban trailer was knocked into kingdom come by a Mauser bullet through the head.

Every Spaniard sprang for a tree, as the smokeless powder used by Jack gave them no clew as to where the fatal bullet came from. Two of them were so uncertain as to the direction from which the bullet came they stood on the wrong side of the tree, and the result was that each got a bullet in his back.

"There are three more left, pard," said Jack, "but as the trailer is done for, we might as well let the others go."

"Yes," assented the other, "and we'll go, too," and they slipped away from their position, leaving the surviving Spaniards crouching behind the trees in mortal fear of being shot.

Half a mile away from the spot Jack and Yankee Doodle stopped because darkness had overtaken them, and they spent the night under a huge magnolia, whose stiff green leaves afforded them some protection against the midnight downpour of rain.

They spent an uncomfortable night, as they were obliged to sit up and sleep leaning against the trunk of a tree. Of course they were wet when morning came, and the dense foliage of the trees prevented the sun from drying their clothes for a long time.

"Jack," said Yankee Doodle, "those three Spaniards will make their way back to Guantanamo this morning, and report what happened to them, with the result that another search will be made for us with other Cubans as trailers; so the best thing we can do is to make our way down to the shore of Guantanamo Bay where the marines are camped. After spending two or three days there, they will give up the search, and the coast will be clear for us again."

"I guess you're right, pard," said Jack, "for I must confess that while I'm very fond of hunting, I don't like to be hunted myself."

They at once started off in a south-easterly direction, and after traveling three or four hours through the woods, suddenly came to the conclusion that they were lost.

"Jack," said Yankee Doodle, "it looks to me as though we are lost."

"Not a bit of it, pard," replied the cowboy.

"Do you know where we are?" Yankee Doodle asked him.

"Of course I do; we are somewhere in eastern Cuba."

"That's wonderful," remarked Yankee Doodle. "I'm glad you told me, for I thought maybe we were away at the other end of the island."

"That's it, pard," laughed Jack. "You get muddled easily, and if we keep on a mile or two farther this way, you'll probably think we are in the Philippine islands."

"Then for Heaven's sake let's change our course and go in another direction."

"All right; come ahead," and Jack led off in an easterly direction. After going about a mile, they suddenly came upon a camp of Spanish soldiers, and at the same time caught a glimpse of the waters of the bay away out beyond them.

"Keep quiet, pard," cautioned Jack, "for we have run into a lot of Spaniards, who would lose no time in standing us up against a tree and making a target of us."

They turned squarely to the right and cautiously picked their way through the woods in a southerly direction. Presently they came in sight of the road leading down to Caimenera, as they recognized landmarks the moment they came in sight of it.

Half an hour later they were on the shore of the bay with a party of marines. Of course they had to report to the colonel commanding and tell him why they had returned, but, as on their former visit, they made no mention of the mysterious unknown Spaniard.

The colonel gave them a cordial welcome, telling them they could stay in the camp as long as they wished.

"Have you heard anything from Santiago, colonel?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Nothing definite," was the reply, "other than that they have been having some hard fighting on the hills overlooking the city."

"Pard," said Jack, "I've a mind to go over there and see what they are doing."

"Go where?" the colonel asked.

"Why, to San Juan hill and El Caney and all our boys scattered around there," explained Jack.

"That's a pretty dangerous trip for one man to make," remarked the colonel.

"So it is," remarked the cowboy, "but it is dangerous to go anywhere in Cuba just now."

"Do you really mean it?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Yes, pard, I'll start at sunrise if you say so."

"All right then, go to General Wheeler and tell him everything you have seen, except the one thing we have agreed to be quiet about."

The boys spent the night with the marines very comfortably, and the next morning a little after sunrise Jack started out to return to the American army in front of Santiago, after first arranging with Yankee Doodle as to where he could be found on his return on the third day.

"I'll wait for you here, Jack, but at the same time will keep up the watch on the enemy as before."

When Jack was gone Yankee Doodle proceeded to make himself at home among the marines, where he soon made pleasant acquaintances among the subordinate officers, many of whom urged him to tell the story of his adventures in the battles in which he had led the charge with his drum.

He told many incidents of his career in Cuba, but never once made himself the hero of any of them. There were always others to whom he gave the credit

of the greatest courage and most daring deeds. He found many of the marines on shore whom he had met when scouting for Admiral Sampson and Commodore Schley, and some of them made themselves known to him.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MAN ON THE BLUFF—SOMETHING ABOUT FISHING.

THE day on which Jack returned to Santiago Yankee Doodle spent in camp on the shores of Guantánamo Bay. It was really the first day of leisure he had had for weeks, and he resolved to spend a portion of it in a row-boat fishing.

Accompanied by two young officers of marines he entered a small boat and rowed a couple of miles out, down below where the vessels were anchored, and stopped within a quarter of a mile of a beautifully wooded strip of shore.

There they dropped their hooks overboard, and for a couple of hours enjoyed the fishing.

Suddenly there was a light splash in the water about ten feet behind them, and one of the officers remarked that the fish were becoming lively.

"Was it a fish?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"It must have been," said the other.

"Well, it didn't sound like one to me," remarked Yankee Doodle, "for the splash of a fish and the sound of something dropping into the water are quite different."

At that moment another splash was heard about an oar's length to the right of where Yankee Doodle sat, which he saw very plainly.

"Fish be blowed!" he laughed; "that was a Mauser bullet."

"The deuce you say," exclaimed the lieutenant.

"That's just what it was," insisted Yankee Doodle, "and there's a fellow out there in those woods somewhere drawing a bead on us, but it is a little too far away for him to hit us."

"Well, now," said the lieutenant, "that rather spoils my fishing."

"How so?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Oh, thunder! you ask foolish questions! Who can enjoy fishing while acting as a target for a man with a rifle?"

"It depends a good deal upon who is behind the rifle," laughed Yankee Doodle. "These Cubans or Spaniards couldn't hit a house a quarter of a mile away, except by accident."

"Very true," assented the lieutenant; "but I've heard somewhere that accidents sometimes happen in the best regulated families, and I happen to know that many a man has been killed by a bullet not aimed at him, and that many a poor fellow has been killed by bullets that were aimed at someone else. As we didn't come out here to be shot at I'd rather stop fishing than to play target for any man whether he knows how to shoot or not."

"Well, don't stop fishing yet," suggested Yankee Doodle; "just keep hauling them in while I scan those woods out there with my spy-glass," and he drew his

field glass from its case and pointed with it towards the woods.

In less than five minutes he remarked :

"I see the chap ; there are two of them. Just hand me my rifle over there, and I'll give you a specimen of marksmanship that is worth remembering."

One of the officers picked up a Mauser and passed it over to Yankee Doodle who quietly measured the distance to shore by eyesight. Said he to the lieutenant :

"You are a better judge than I of distance on water ; how far from here do you think it is to the beach ?"

"It's a full quarter of a mile," replied the marine, looking in the direction of the shore.

"All right, then ; it can't be more than a hundred yards from the shore to the top of that bluff where those fellows are amusing themselves at our expense," and he accordingly adjusted the sight on his rifle for that distance.

"Now," said he to the lieutenant, "just take a squint at those fellows under that tree over that bald spot on the face of the bluff."

The officer turned the glass in that direction, and after a minute or two Yankee Doodle asked :

"Do you see them ?"

"Yes," was the reply, "and one of them is preparing to fire again. Look out now, he has raised his rifle to his shoulder."

"Keep your eye on him," said Yankee Doodle, and about ten seconds later he fired.

"By George, you got him !" cried the lieutenant. "He dropped his gun, pressed his hands across his stomach, bent over, and landed on his head."

"It was a magnificent shot !" exclaimed the other lieutenant.

"I can do that three times out of five," laughed Yankee Doodle, "when I have a good view of the target."

"Look, look !" said the lieutenant passing the glass over to Yankee Doodle. "The other fellow is taking the wounded man away !"

Yankee Doodle turned the glass again in the direction of the bluff, and chuckled as he saw another pick up the wounded man and disappear with him in the woods beyond.

"Now we can go on with the fishing," he laughed, "for I guess they won't bother us any more," and he proceeded to bait his hook and drop it overboard again.

"I don't believe there is another man in the army in Cuba who can equal that shot," remarked one of the lieutenants.

"You are very much mistaken," remarked Yankee Doodle, "for fully half the men in Roosevelt's Rough Riders can do even better than that ; and Jack Wilson, who left us this morning to return to San Juan, could plant every shot in a bull's-eye at that distance without any trouble. I've seen him knock a buzzard out of a tree at a distance of more than half a mile, and that, too, with a cross wind blowing. I've seen

him take a revolver in each hand, hold them out in front of him, and empty all the chambers in both about as fast as he could pull the trigger, and plant every bullet in a spot the size of a man's hand at a distance of fifty yards. He can ride at full speed on horseback, and hit a bull's-eye fifty yards away three times out of five."

"Oh, look here now," laughed the lieutenant, "I admit you are telling all that to marines, but this particular marine doesn't believe it."

"I'm willing to swear to it," laughed Yankee Doodle.

"I beg you won't do it, though," returned the other, "for while I have a pretty good opinion of your marksmanship, I wouldn't like to be skeptical about your veracity."

"Oh, well, then, we'll go on with our fishing," and with that he gave his line a jerk, and the next moment came very near being yanked overboard by the fish he had hooked. He was holding the line in his hand, but he soon let go of it, as it was so small it was in danger of cutting the flesh to the bone.

And the fish got away.

"Why in thunder didn't you hold onto him ?" the lieutenant asked.

"I couldn't," was the reply, as he looked at his hand which was bleeding where the line had cut it. "I didn't come out prepared to catch whales."

"By George !" said the other, "I wish I'd gotten him on my hook, as I happen to have on gloves and might have been able to hold him."

"What do you think he was ?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"I've no idea, but it might have been a shark."

"Well, we don't want any sharks, so let him go ; but we can tell the boys when we get back to camp that the biggest fish got away."

"Oh, that's a story every fisherman tells and nobody believes. Do you want another hook and line ?"

"Yes," and another was passed over to him. While he was fixing it, preparatory to dropping it overboard, he remarked that it was a little singular that fish stories, no matter how truthful, were always doubted by listeners unless the fish was exhibited in proof of the statements made.

"Oh, that's because that next to the jam in the closet the first lies told by every boy are generally about the big fish that got away."

"Maybe that is the cause of it," laughed Yankee Doodle, "but I once heard an old sailor give a better explanation of it than that."

"What was it ?" the lieutenant asked.

"It was about the experience of an English missionary on one of the islands in the South Pacific. He had been a couple of years on the island, and by good conduct, as well as great discretion, had won the confidence of the natives in the village where he was stationed. One day he got five of the natives to row him out a quarter of a mile from shore in one of their canoes to give him a chance to do some fishing.

"While out there he improved his opportunity by

telling them the story of the fishermen who had fished all night without catching anything, when the white man's God appeared on the beach and asked them what luck they had had. They told him they had fished all night and caught nothing. 'Cast your net over on the other side,' said the white man's Saviour, and they did so, catching so many fish in it they broke the net.

"The natives were pleased with the story, and remarked to each other that the white man's God was a great God and a good God, and that they would believe in Him and worship Him, whereat the missionary was greatly pleased with himself. But he made the mistake of telling the story of Jonah and the whale.

"The natives listened to him with bulging eyes and in profound silence. When he had finished the story the unsophisticated blacks gazed at each other in silence for several minutes, and then one after another rose up, dived overboard and swam ashore, leaving the missionary alone in the canoe.

"They could understand the story of the net full of fishes, but couldn't swallow the yarn about Jonah and the whale.

"So I guess the old sailor was right when he said that skepticism about fish stories began when that story was first published."

The two young officers laughed heartily over the story, and admitted that so far as the records went they guessed he was right.

"You see," laughed Yankee Doodle, "stories that border on the marvelous must have some sort of proof of their authenticity before intelligent people will believe them. Had I been out here in this boat and returned with the story of knocking that fellow over out there, a quarter of a mile away, who had been amusing himself by shooting at me, who would have believed my report?"

"Mighty few, I guess," said one of the lieutenants, "but you can tell it now and refer to us as witnesses."

"Now let me tell you," said Yankee Doodle, "that just about fifty per cent. of all who heard us tell it would believe it, notwithstanding all three of us might swear to the truth of it, while at the same time ninety per cent. will believe the most marvelous story that savors of the supernatural. If you go among the Cubans of the lower classes they'll believe any kind of impossible story that may be told them if you give it a coloring of the supernatural, otherwise they would not."

He was about to tell another story illustrative of the remark he had just made about the Cubans when one of the officers got a fish on his hook which gave him such a hard pull that he rose to his feet with the line wrapped around his hand in order to put up a good fight. The fish, however, jerked him off his balance, and he went overboard head foremost and disappeared from sight quick as a flash.

"Hello!" exclaimed Yankee Doodle, "that must be my fish trying it over again."

The look of concern on the other officer's face, however, caused Yankee Doodle to ask quickly:

"Can he swim?"

"Oh, yes," was the reply, "but he had the line wrapped around his hand, and if he should become entangled the chances are that the fish will drown him."

A full minute passed, but it seemed like an age for Yankee Doodle and the young officer. They looked at each other as if trying to read what was passing in their minds, when the other came to the surface about two-thirds drowned. He had swallowed sea water until he could swallow no more, and was practically unable to help himself. Yankee Doodle sprang overboard and swam to his side, where he raised his head out of the water, at the same time calling to the other to row alongside. The lieutenant quickly obeyed, and his comrade was quickly drawn into the boat, after which Yankee Doodle climbed in, and saw that consciousness was returning to the victim of the big fish.

The first thing the lieutenant said when he pulled himself together was to ask the question:

"Where is the fish?"

Quick as a flash Yankee Doodle picked up a fish weighing about two pounds which was lying in the bottom of the boat, held it up before him with the remark:

"Here it is."

The lieutenant's eyes bulged, and an expression of disgust swept across his face. A few minutes later the nausea of the great quantity of sea water he had swallowed made him very ill, and not until he had disgorged the greater portion of it did he feel any better, and even then all the hilarity had gone out of him.

The effort of his comrade, however, to preserve his gravity over the sight of the fish that Yankee Doodle had exhibited as the cause of his unwilling plunge overboard soon excited his suspicion, and he quietly remarked:

"I guess it was a bigger fish than that."

Then the two exploded with hilarious laughter, in which he joined with a somewhat sickly grin, ending with the remark from him that he guessed it was Jonah's fish.

"I suspect that it was the one I had hold of," remarked Yankee Doodle, "and as you expressed the regret that you had not got him on your hook at the time I let him get away, he doubtless returned to satisfy his curiosity as to what you would do with him. If fishes can laugh they are doubtless having a good deal of fun down below."

"Well," said the other, "so far as I am concerned I have had fun enough to-day, and if it is all the same to you, we'll go back and turn our catch over to the boys."

"Glad you made the suggestion," said Yankee Doodle, "for my desire for fishing was satisfied more than an hour ago."

They rowed back to the landing place, and so hot

was the blazing sun that ere they reached it their clothing was so nearly dry no one suspected they had been in the water. They were congratulated on their success as fishermen, and suggestions were made that the commissary department should make a requisition upon the colonel for their services.

The story of the adventure though, leaked out, and that evening there were many hearty laughs at the expense of the lieutenant, as well as skeptical remarks about the story of the shooting.

"You will please remember what I told you," said Yankee Doodle to both of them, "that even with three reputable witnesses there are people who will doubt our story about shooting that fellow on the bluff."

"Oh, yes," laughed one of the lieutenants, "but we'll keep on telling the story just the same, and shoot the first man who calls us liars."

CHAPTER VIII.

A LESSON IN MARKSMANSHIP FOR ONE WHO COULDN'T HIT A MULE CART.

THE next morning after his fishing frolic Yankee Doodle, believing that the Spaniards had given up the search for him, decided to go out on the old Guantanamo road again to see what they were doing. He accordingly slipped away from the camp of the marines, made his way through the woods, crossed the road and began working up in a northerly direction towards the city.

He no longer had any fears of his trail of two days before being followed, as each heavy rainfall entirely obliterated tracks and trails.

When he reached the point opposite the place where he held his last interview with the Unknown he stopped for a while, but finally decided to push on farther and view the Spanish camp from the hills north of the city.

He moved through the woods leisurely, at the same time keeping a very cautious watch, for, being alone, he had no desire to come in contact with any hostile parties. But he had not gone very far before he ran into a party of three Cubans, who seemed to be as much surprised at the meeting as himself.

The three immediately assumed a hostile attitude, but he quickly and rightly judged that they were insurgents' spies or scouts.

"Who are you, senor?" one of them asked, holding his machete in a rather menacing way.

"I am an American," he replied, "and we ought to be friends if we are not, seeing that you are Cubans."

"Si, senor," said the fellow, "we are Cubans, and if you are Americano we ought to be friends."

"That's all right, then," said he, "for I am not only an American but a soldier also, and I am here to watch the enemy over there," and he pointed in the direction of Guantanamo.

His imperfect Spanish and appearance were certificate enough of the truth of his statement, but his dress was not that of the marines down in the camp

on the bay shore, a thing which the three Cubans were quick to note. Then, too, his rifle was a Mauser, another thing they noticed.

"You are not from the ships, senor," said their spokesman.

"No, I am from the army in front of Santiago."

On hearing that their faces brightened, and one of them asked quickly:

"When did you leave there, senor?"

"A week ago," he replied, "two days after the battle of San Juan Hill."

"Were you in that battle, senor?"

"Yes."

"Then you were not in the other battle at El Caney?"

"No, I didn't know that another had been fought."

"A great battle has been fought, senor," said the Cuban, "and thousands have been slain. El Caney was captured by the Americanos, and all the Spaniards driven into the City of Santiago de Cuba."

"That's news to me, senor," said he, "but I was expecting such a battle to be fought, and knew that the Spaniards would be whipped when it was. We have come to Cuba to drive Spain out, and we are going to do it! Were you in the fight at El Caney?"

"No, senor; Garcia's men held the road on the right while the Americanos stormed the Spanish intrenchments."

"Oh, well, that's all the same," he replied, "for it is very seldom that a battle is fought in which every regiment takes part. Some have to hold positions without firing a shot, whilst others bear the brunt of the fight. Do you belong to Garcia's command?"

"Si, senor; we are in Castillo's brigade."

"Castillo is a brave man and a skillful officer. I know him," said Yankee Doodle. "Have you seen anything unusual going on to-day?"

"No, senor; everything is quiet here."

"Are you scouting by order of the general?"

"No, senor; we are here without any orders."

On hearing that, Yankee Doodle suspected that they were out on a plundering expedition on their own hook, as he had seen many others doing in the past.

"That's the trouble with you fellows," he smiled; "There is a great lack of discipline in the Cuban army. In the American army, if a soldier left camp without orders he would be severely punished, if not shot."

"Why should they, senor, when they are loyal and true and fighting the enemy wherever they see them?"

"Simply because discipline is absolutely necessary to success with all armies. The first duty of a soldier is to obey orders. If there are a thousand men in your command, and they are permitted to go about as they please, just as you three are doing, they would be liable to be attacked by the enemy, while half of the command would be strolling about over the country. An officer should always know the strength of his command at any hour in the day or night, which he cannot do if his men are permitted to leave camp whenever they please without his knowledge."

The three Cubans evidently were not pleased with his comments on their conduct, a fact which did not escape him, although they did not speak of it. They were about fifty yards from the roadside, and while they were there a small party of Spanish cavalry, perhaps scouts, passed along the road. The three Cubans quickly hurried forward through the thicket to get a view of them, and Yankee Doodle, anxious to watch them as well as the Spaniards, followed.

The cavalry passed by, and in a little while an old Cuban, with a cart drawn by a lean, half-starved mule, came along. Yankee Doodle quickly recognized him as the same one whom he and Jack saw on the day he was robbed by two Cubans farther down the road.

As soon as he arrived opposite where the three Cubans were concealed, the latter darted out into the road, and surrounded his cart.

Yankee Doodle kept back in the thicket and watched them. He saw them plunder the cart of its contents of vegetables, and listened to the wailing of the old Cuban as he protested.

"Shut up," ordered one of the Cubans, "or we will split your head. You are carrying provisions to the camp at Guantanamo; why don't you take them to the Americanos down below."

"I would, senor, but they are fighting there all the time," replied the old man, "and I must sell vegetables or starve."

"Eat them yourself," said one of the Cuban scouts, "and then you won't starve. But if we catch you bringing any more this way we'll feed the machete."

The Cubans quickly took what they wanted from the cart, dumped the other into the bushes and ordered the old man to go back home. The old fellow quickly obeyed, and the three Cubans retired to the thicket where they sat down and stuffed themselves with the fruit and vegetables taken from the cart.

"It's pretty hard on the old man," Yankee Doodle demonstrated.

"Si, senor, but he must not feed the Spaniards while Cubans fight for *Cuba Libre*."

"You are right," he assented, "and this is not the first time I've seen that old fellow's cart on this road. I'm inclined to think that he doesn't care which side wins in this fight."

"No, senor; there are many like him in Cuba; when a man is starving he forgets everything but his hunger."

Scarcely quarter of an hour had passed when they heard a party of horsemen dashing along the road. The three Cubans sat still gorging themselves with the captured fruit. Yankee Doodle sprang forward to catch a glimpse of the passing horsemen, and was astonished at seeing them halt, leap to the ground and plunge into the bushes, within ten paces of where he was standing.

They were accompanied by the old man of the cart. He quickly understood the situation; the old

man had met the cavalry and reported the presence of the three Cubans on the roadside.

They were so close upon him he had no time to give the three Cubans warning without running the risk of being seen himself, so he dashed off at a tangent and escaped to a convenient thicket, running until he had placed three hundred yards or more between himself and the Spaniards.

He heard half a dozen shots fired, several yells and fierce shouts and then quiet followed. A little later he saw the cavalymen pass leisurely up the road.

"I guess they wiped out those Cubans," he said to himself, "and I'll go back down there and see about it."

Cautiously wending his way through the bushes, with the road on his left as a guide he soon reached the spot where the three Cubans were when the enemy appeared. He heard someone moving about, and soon found the old man of the cart gathering up the remains of his fruit and vegetables and placing them in a bag. On the ground lay two of the Cubans dead. The third one had probably escaped.

Watching the old man, he saw him throw the bag over his shoulders and return to the road, down which he disappeared in the way he had come.

"Well, well," he muttered to himself, "this is indeed a cruel war. To save about fifty cents worth of vegetables and fruit that old fellow caused the death of two of his countrymen, and I am sorry that I cannot run the risk of hearing what he has to say about it."

When the old man disappeared down the road Yankee Doodle turned and again made his way in the direction of the city, but keeping well in the bushes to avoid being seen. About a mile farther up in that direction he ascended a hill, from the crest of which he had a fine view of the city and the camp of the Spanish army. It was much nearer than any view he had hitherto had, and about as close as he dared go.

He noticed a road leading out from the north of the city and another eastward, along which he saw little parties of mounted scouts coming and going. Otherwise the scene was an extremely peaceful one.

He sat there for upwards of an hour gazing upon the scene, when he saw the old Cuban, seated on his cart, driving slowly by towards the city.

"Well, well," he laughed, "the old rascal will sell a little fruit and vegetables after all."

He had no sooner made the remark than he heard the sharp crack of a rifle from the woods on the other side of the road, but farther down the hillside than where he was.

It had a startling effect on the old man of the cart, who began beating his mule with tremendous energy. It took half a dozen tremendous whacks to instill any degree of activity into the animal, which finally started at a rapid pace down the hill. Not for a moment did the old Cuban let up on the unfortunate animal, which finally broke into a fast run.

Crack!

Another rifle shot from the same quarter rang out,

which caused the old man to rise up and belabor his mule with renewed energy, and a few moments later cart and mule were out of sight around the bend of the road.

"That's getting to market under difficulties," Yankee Doodle remarked to himself, "but I'd like to know who the fellow is who can't hit an outfit like that at a distance of a hundred yards, and I'm going to cross over there and interview him. He might shoot at me, but he evidently can't hit anything."

He passed down the side of the hill, keeping well in the bushes, and watched for an opportunity to dart across the road. Then he made his way back into the thicket and beat about among the bushes in a quiet sort of way for about fifteen minutes, when he suddenly came upon a Cuban who was peering at him from behind a tree with a Mauser rifle in his hand.

He instantly recognized the fellow as one of the three who had plundered the old man's cart a mile farther up the road.

"Say, what's the matter with you?" he called.

The Cuban made no reply, but kept well behind the tree with only his face exposed as he watched the young American coming through the thicket. When he recognized Yankee Doodle, he called out:

"Is it you, *Senor Americano*?"

"Yes, *Cubano*; I was on the other side of the road when I heard you shoot at the old man in the cart."

"*Caramba!* I missed him, *senor*," said he, with a ring of bitterness in his voice.

"Yes, and the old fellow ought to have leaped out of his cart and whaled the life out of you for wasting ammunition that way."

"*Diablos!* He is a traitor!" hissed the Cuban.

"That may be so, *senor*," said Yankee Doodle, "but that isn't half as bad as being a poor shot," and Yankee Doodle joined him under the tree behind which he was standing, where he told him of the fate of his two comrades.

"Si, *senor*," said he, "they were killed by my side, and bullets whistled all around me as I ran through the bushes, but I saw the old man with them and have sworn by all the saints to kill him."

"Well, let me tell you, *senor*, that before you attempt to kill anybody with a rifle you should learn to shoot, for it seems that you can't hit a house two hundred yards away. You had two shots at a mule and cart with a man in it, and yet they got away unharmed. When a man fires a shot at another he invites one aimed at himself, and his own life is placed in jeopardy by his failure to aim well."

"No man can hit every time, *senor*."

"Nonsense," he replied; "a bullet will go wherever a man sends it; these rifles are made to shoot straight, and if the marksman fails to hit the target the fault is his, not the weapon's."

"I will machete him," remarked the Cuban, still having the old man of the cart in his mind.

After further questioning the Cuban, Yankee Doodle made the discovery that he knew nothing about the sights on the barrel of the Mauser, that he

simply pointed the gun in the direction of an object he wished to shoot at and pulled the trigger without aiming. The weapon was one he had recently captured, and he had never been taught how to use it. Yet he had been ever since the beginning of the revolution in Cuba, most eager to own a rifle. It was the ambition of every Cuban in the field, but of all marksmen in the world, they were the poorest.

"Now, see here," said Yankee Doodle, "I will explain to you how to aim so as to hit what you shoot at," and he carefully explained how the aiming was done; how the target must be covered by the sight before the trigger was pulled. He also showed him how to adjust the long range sight, and pointed out to him the marks for one hundred, two hundred, five hundred and a thousand yards, which distances he had to judge for himself.

"Now," said he, "there's a couple of buzzards sitting on a tree down in the edge of yonder clearing, fully a thousand yards away from here. They may be a little farther or a little nearer. I'll show you how to adjust the sight now for that distance," and he proceeded to do so, after which he raised the rifle to his shoulder, aimed quickly, and fired.

One of the buzzards dropped from his perch to the ground, whilst the other flew away in alarm.

"*Caramba!*" gasped the Cuban in amazement.

"That's the way to do it," said Yankee Doodle.

"Now, how many cartridges have you?"

"Only ten, *senor*."

"Then you should be careful with them, and never fire at anything until you have first aimed to make sure of your mark."

CHAPTER IX.

"CUBANO, YOU DIE THE DEATH OF A TRAITOR!"—YANKEE DOODLE A PRISONER—THE UNKNOWN AGAIN.

HAVING learned his lesson in marksmanship, the Cuban was eager to try his hand once more at the old man of the cart, seeing which Yankee Doodle said to him:

"*Senor Cubano*, you have many other things to learn about the art of war. If you are here to watch the enemy and assist your general and all others who are fighting for the expulsion of the Spaniards from Cuba, you should devote yourself to that work alone instead of wasting any time in the gratification of private personal revenge. When you are out scouting you should never fight unless first attacked, and should avoid being seen by the enemy as long as it is possible for you to do so. It's the business of a scout to watch rather than to fight, and by that means learn of the movements and intentions of the enemy, which information you should quickly send or take to your general. By that means you strike a blow for your country and thus help on to the defeat of the enemy. Under no circumstance should you ever commit any act while in the vicinity of the enemy that would let them know of your presence in their neighborhood. Had you not halted the old man and

the cart your two comrades would now be alive and by your side. As it is they are dead and nothing has been accomplished."

"But, senor, he was carrying provisions to the enemy," protested the Cuban.

"Very true, senor, but it was a mere handful—not enough to feed a dozen men—and surely not worth the lives of your two comrades."

The Cuban opened his eyes in astonishment, for the lessons he was learning had been paid for at a terrible cost.

"Now," continued Yankee Doodle, "the old man being a non-combatant should have been permitted to pass unmolested, or when you had stopped him, you and your comrades should have changed your position quickly, for when you let him go he was free to tell where you were, and in this instance did so and disaster followed. Now, had he been a courier carrying dispatches from the Spanish general, it would have been worth while to stop him even with a bullet, get the dispatch and take it promptly to your general. By such means the designs of an enemy are often ascertained and thwarted, and it is often worth more than the lives of a hundred men to do so. Sometimes it is the means of saving the lives of a thousand men or of bringing about a great victory for one side and a crushing defeat for the other. That is the science of war. Just now you seem to have but one desire, and that is to kill that poor old man who sells to the enemy a few vegetables that he might get a few pesetas to save his wife and children from starvation. It is unworthy of a soldier to harbor such feelings or commit such deeds; worse still it is an act of cowardice to shoot down a non-combatant from the bushes. All this may appear strange to you, but it is the rule of civilized warfare among the Christian nations of the world."

"Senor Americano," said the Cuban, "the Spaniards have always treated us here in Cuba as though we were savages or wild beasts."

"Very true, Cubano, and that is why the whole civilized world has no sympathy for Spain to-day; it is why the United States has determined to expel Spain from this part of the world, and for that same reason the American Government will look upon the Cuban Republic, ruled by the Cubans themselves, with the suspicion that they are incapable of self-government."

"Well, senor," the Cuban asked, "what business is it of any other nation how we rule ourselves in Cuba?"

"Ah, Cubano, you might as well ask the question of us in the United States what business is it of ours how Spain ruled Cuba. Spain's blundering rule in Cuba interferes with our commerce and that of the rest of the world, and if Spain produces a state of affairs on the island that impoverishes the people and injures trade and commerce it will wipe out, and a strong government established for the purpose of making the people prosperous and happy and developing the commerce of the island. You may not under-

stand these things now, but it is the rule, even in communities, that a family whose presence is a detriment rather than a benefit to their neighbors must be made to go, as the spirit of the age calls for improvement, advancement, rather than standing still or going backward."

They sat there in the shade of the tree for more than two hours. At the end of that time the old Cuban was seen returning with his cart, and by his side sat a beautiful young girl, apparently not more than fifteen years of age.

The moment he saw him the Cuban sprang to his feet, muttering:

"*Caramba!* I will kill him!"

"Hold on, Cubano," said Yankee Doodle, laying a hand on his arm; "there is a young girl with him, and you might hit her instead of him."

"No matter, senor!" hissed the Cuban.

"Now, see here," said Yankee Doodle, very firmly, "you let the old man alone. He is not a soldier, and even if he were he has that child by his side, and none but a brute would fire at him."

"*Caramba!*" hissed the Cuban, "you must not interfere with me, Senor Americano;" and he jerked away from Yankee Doodle and pointed his rifle in the direction of the old man's cart.

Yankee Doodle quickly pushed the rifle upward and the bullet went skyward.

"*Diablos!*" hissed the enraged native; "I will kill you, Senor Americano," and he dropped his rifle and seized his machete, with which he rushed upon the young American.

Quick as a flash Yankee Doodle drew his revolver and fired, wounding him in the right shoulder.

The machete fell to the ground, and the Cuban staggered back against the tree, staring at Yankee Doodle like a savage tiger at bay.

"You cowardly brute!" exclaimed the young American, "I've a mind to send a bullet through your head. You are no better than a Spaniard. I shall leave you without any means of defense or offense," and with that he picked up the Cuban's Mauser and machete and left him standing there against the tree.

He had gone scarcely ten paces when he heard the Cuban following him.

"Cubano," said he, raising his rifle and aiming at him, "if you follow me I will finish you. We may be fighting for the same end, but cowards and brutes like you cannot fight by my side. You may tell your comrades that American soldiers hate and despise all such men."

With that he turned on his heel, and started down the hillside with the intention of crossing the road. Just as he reached the bushes on the roadside a party of Spanish cavalry, about a dozen in number, came along, going at a sharp pace. He stopped to let them pass before attempting to cross the road.

Just as the Spaniards arrived opposite the thicket in which he was concealed, the Cuban dashed out into the middle of the road and sung out:

"*Viva Espana!* There is an American spy in the bushes there!"

Instantly the Spaniard dismounted and plunged into the thicket before Yankee Doodle could get away. The latter drew his revolver and shot down two of the cavalymen before they had really located him.

The next moment he was seized by half a dozen of them and hurled to the ground. He sprang to his feet, grappled with one of them, from whose belt he drew a revolver, and fired at the Cuban, giving him a mortal wound. The next moment he was hurled to the ground again, overpowered and disarmed.

When they pulled him to his feet, he found himself a prisoner. Still, his satisfaction at having plugged the traitorous Cuban was such he looked at him as he lay on the ground and said:

"Cubano, you die the death of a traitor!"

"And you," returned the Cuban in a voice between a groan and a hiss, "will die, too!"

"Who are you, senor?" one of the Spaniards asked.

"I am an American soldier," he answered.

"What are you doing here away from your command?"

"Doing duty as a scout."

"He is a spy," said the dying Cuban.

"Are you a spy?" the Spaniard asked him.

"No," he replied, "for I have on the uniform of the American army, and had a rifle and brace of revolvers. I have been scouting in these woods, but have never been inside of your lines. That Cuban there is an insurgent, who attempted to shoot me because I would not permit him to kill an old man who was driving by on his cart with a young girl by his side, and I shot him in self-defense. For revenge he betrayed my presence to you."

"We met the old man and the cart," said the Spaniard, who was a sergeant of cavalry.

"What is your name?" the Spaniard asked.

"My name is Freeman, and I belong to the American army now in front of Santiago de Cuba."

The statement seemed to surprise the sergeant, who remarked that he was a long way away from his command.

"Yes," he replied, "but for all that our scouts are watching the forces at Guantanamo."

While he was talking with the sergeant, the Cuban whom he had shot expired.

"You will have to go with us," said the sergeant.

"Very well," was the reply, "I am your prisoner."

They led him out into the road, where they mounted their horses and made him march in front of them. Their two comrades whom he had shot down were laid across their horses and taken along as evidence of his deadly marksmanship.

It was but a short distance to the intrenchments around the city, and so in a little while he was inside the Spanish camp. They conducted him at once to the headquarters of the commandant of the post, to whom the sergeant related the details of his capture.

The commandant looked at him in silence for a few moments, and asked:

"What were you doing there, so far away from your command?"

"Doing duty as a scout," he replied.

"You mean as a spy," corrected the commandant.

"Nothing of the kind," he answered promptly, "for no sane man would consider another a spy who wears the uniform of his own army and the weapons provided him by his government. Then again I was captured outside of your line and was never inside until brought here by my captors."

In answer to other questions he repeated to the commandant the story he had told the sergeant about the Cuban insurgent who had denounced him as a spy. The sergeant himself confirmed part of his story by stating he had met the old Cuban and the girl on the cart, after which the commandant ordered him locked up and kept incommunicado.

"Well, I'm jugged," said Yankee Doodle to himself, when he found himself a solitary prisoner in the hands of the enemy. "It is by no means a pleasant experience, and yet they have treated me better than I expected they would, but it may be on account of my nationality. Were I a Cuban insurgent I would probably be shot at sunrise, but I guess they recognize the fact the American prisoners of war must be treated as such."

Night came on and he was left in total darkness in the cell into which he had been cast, and that, too, without a morsel of anything to eat. He was philosophical enough, however, to make the best of his situation without worrying over it, and in a little while he laid down on the hard floor and went to sleep.

How long he slept he knew not, but was awakened during the night by a touch on the shoulder, followed by a voice, saying:

"Get up, senor."

He opened his eyes and sat up, while the light from a dim lantern gleamed in his face. He looked around for a moment or two until he was again told to get up.

He rose to his feet and found himself face to face with a man somewhat taller than himself. The latter raised the lantern up high enough for Yankee Doodle to see his face.

It was the face of the Unknown, whom he had twice met in the woods out near the Guantanamo road.

His surprise was so great as to cause him to give a sudden start, which caused a smile to creep across the face of the Unknown.

"You failed to follow my advice, senor," his visitor gravely remarked.

"I beg your pardon, senor. I retired from the scene altogether until I thought all danger of pursuit had passed."

"Then you returned?" added the other.

"Yes, as was my duty to do. I was not captured by soldiers who were looking for me, but it was the

result of an act of treachery on the part of a Cuban insurgent."

"Yes, yes," assented the other, "I have heard the story, and I assure you that it is believed by all who have heard it, and because of your defense of the old man and his granddaughter you are not to be held as a prisoner of war, but sent away at once."

"Ah, senor," said Yankee Doodle, "that is your work, and I assure you on the honor of a soldier that it shall ever be held in grateful remembrance by me."

"Very well," said the Unknown. "Permit me to again urge upon you to return to your command with the assurance I have already given you that the movement so much feared by your general will never be made. You can come with me now," and with that the Unknown turned on his heel and walked out of the room followed by Yankee Doodle.

When they had passed out on the street the Unknown extinguished the light in the lantern he was carrying and proceeded on his way in the direction of the intrenchments on the west side of the city.

Several times they were halted by sentinels, and each time the Unknown whispered the password that permitted him to pass on. They kept on until they reached the intrenchments, and there again a whisper from his guide passed them beyond the lines.

The Unknown led the way half a mile beyond the picket line, where he suddenly halted with the remark:

"We part here, senor, after which you must go on your way alone. Again I advise you to return to your command, as it is a waste of time and a jeopardizing of life that is utterly unnecessary."

"Thank you, senor; I shall return and report to my general everything except that which concerns yourself. But if he orders me to return and keep up the watch I shall obey him, even though I lose my life in so doing."

"Which shows that you are a good soldier," remarked the Unknown.

"Thank you, senor; I have always tried to be so considered. This war will end soon, and when Spain and America are again friends I would consider it an honor to know you personally."

"Thank you, Senor Americano; but it cannot be, for my part in this unhappy business will belong to the unwritten pages of the period;" and with that he extended his hand to Yankee Doodle, who grasped and shook it warmly. The next moment he turned away and strode off in the darkness in the direction of the Spanish intrenchments.

"Yankee Doodle stood alone for a few moments in the middle of the road gazing in the direction the Unknown had gone after which he turned to pursue his way with the quiet remark to himself:

"This is the greatest mystery I ever ran up against."

CHAPTER X.

ON THE HILLS OF GUANTANAMO—THE NEWS JACK BROUGHT FROM EL CANEY.

As he trudged along the road in the direction of the camp of the American marines on the shores of Guantanamo Bay, Yankee Doodle could think of nothing but the mystery of the Unknown personage with whom he had thrice been thrown in contact.

He even forgot the peril of his situation in thinking about it, for while he was again free to go where he pleased he was unarmed, as his weapons had not been returned to him. When that fact finally occurred to him, he said to himself:

"This is a mighty bad climate for a man unarmed, but I'll be all right when I get back to the marines, as they have guns and ammunition to spare. Then, too, I must wait there until Jack returns, and I guess I had better not say anything about my capture and singular release, for if the newspapers got hold of it I would be accused of romancing and thus gain the reputation of a first-class liar. I hate a liar above everything else in the shape of a man, and as General Wheeler and Shafter and others have implicitly relied on every statement I have made to them, they would become suspicious of me were I to tell them the whole truth about this thing. Of course, when I get back to camp I've got to account for the loss of my rifle and brace of revolvers, and I'll have to do that by simply telling them I was captured and afterwards made my escape, which will be pretty close to the truth, anyway."

He had passed along the road for upwards of five miles, when the dark clouds that usually produced a downpour of rain at that hour of the night began to obscure the light of the stars.

"I've got to take it," he muttered to himself, "and maybe it will be somewhat of a protection for me; for if there are any scouts out at this time of night along the road they will seek shelter. And then the noise of the downpour of rain will prevent my footsteps from being heard by scouts lying in the bushes by the roadside; so let her come."

A few minutes later the heavy raindrops began pattering on the trees, leaves and ground. Vivid flashes of lightning illumined the scene, and at each flash he could see far down the road ahead of him.

He trudged on, however, and soon a torrent of water began rushing past him down the hill. On the right of the road was a gully; it was soon filled by a raging torrent.

"If I had a boat now," he said, "I could save myself quite a walk."

The downpour of rain lasted a couple of hours, during which time he made between four and five miles, which brought him pretty close to the rear of the Spanish forces who had been struggling for weeks to dislodge the marines on the shores of the bay.

He pushed on, however, taking his chances of running into any straggling detachments of the enemy. But at that hour everything was quiet in both camps.

When day dawned, he found himself opposite the ships anchored out a mile or so from the shore.

"I'm all right, now," said he, and half an hour later he approached a party of marines who were wending their way down to the beach to take a swim. As for himself he didn't need a swim, for he had been in a shower bath for a couple of hours, only he used fresh water instead of salt.

He lost no time in seeking one of the lieutenants of marines, with whom he had fished two days before when they became quite chummy.

"Hello, Yankee Doodle!" the lieutenant hailed him when he saw him. "Where have you been?"

"Up towards the city," he replied, "and have just come in with an appetite that would produce a famine in any mess in this camp."

"Not much it won't," returned the lieutenant, laughingly, "for we have plenty to eat, if nothing else."

"Then in the name of Uncle Sam let me have a breakfast, for I haven't had a morsel to eat since noon yesterday."

"Where's your weapon?" the lieutenant asked.

"The Spaniards have it."

"Oh, hello!" exclaimed the officer, "did they rub you so close as that?"

"You can bet they did; they captured me yesterday afternoon up within a mile or two of their intrenchments, but as I left them without leave last night, I didn't have the cheek to ask them for my arms."

"Why in thunder didn't you take them, anyhow?"

"Oh, that would have been impolite."

The lieutenant laughed heartily, and told him if he would wait half an hour he could have as much breakfast as he could put away.

"All right," he replied, "but it will be the longest half hour I ever passed in my life."

The breakfast he got was a good one, and while he was enjoying it the officers plied him with questions about his capture. He gave it to them pretty straight, with the exception of his being taken into the city, or of his interview with the commandant of the post and the mysterious Unknown.

The lieutenant informed him that on the day before there was a pretty sharp fight out on the fighting line, in which the enemy had been repulsed by a dash of the marines.

"We picked up about thirty Mausers," he added, "with quite a number of revolvers, to say nothing of cartridge belts filled with ammunition. You can have your pick of them."

"Thank you," said Yankee Doodle; "I have a very serious objection to going about unarmed in this region. Have you been fishing again?"

"No," laughed the lieutenant. "The truth is, I've had enough of that sort of sport, for one never knows what kind of a fish he is going to get on his hook out there in those waters."

Soon after breakfast Yankee Doodle took a nap, for his long walk in the drenching rain began to tell on

him. He slept a couple of hours in the lieutenant's tent, and was awakened by the rattling of small arms out on the firing line.

He arose, got his rifle and a brace of revolvers and went up over the hill to take part in the fun. There he caught up with the lieutenant, who told him that within the last five minutes three bullets had passed through his clothes.

"I am satisfied," said he, "that there is a sharp-shooter out there somewhere who is trying to pick me off."

"Which way do the bullets come?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"From the hill out there in our front," and he pointed to the brow of a hill some four or five hundred yards away out in front of the firing line.

"All right," said Yankee Doodle, "I'll look for him," and he lay down under a palmetto bush, drew out his field-glass and began hunting for the enemy, who was keeping up a desultory fire from the opposite hill.

He soon saw a number of crouching figures about among the stubble palmetto, who could not be well seen by the naked eye at that distance.

He saw one fellow kneeling and firing quite rapidly, and laying down the field-glass, took up his rifle, aimed and fired.

"Oh, ho, my fine fellow," he chuckled, as he saw the man rise up and stagger away, "I guess you won't do any more shooting to-day."

Then he lay down his rifle and again took up the field-glass.

"By George," he exclaimed, "Uncle Sam ought to give the boys field-glasses, for it would give them a chance to get right in among the Spaniards without their knowing it. Why, I can see about a dozen of them out there now, and if I don't have some fun with them I've forgotten how to shoot," and calling the lieutenant to his side, he told him to lie down there by him and watch them jump.

He then began picking them off, while the lieutenant with the field glass looked on.

Crack! went his Mauser.

"Good!" exclaimed the lieutenant, "that got him!"

"Watch the other fellow on his left now."

Crack! went the rifle again.

"Good! It knocked him clear over!"

"There's another in the bushes still farther to the left; do you see him?"

"Yes," answered the lieutenant.

"Well, now, watch him jump," and again the Mauser cracked.

"Bully!" exclaimed the lieutenant. "That bowled him over and he's lying flat on his face."

"I gave it to him in the neck that time," said Yankee Doodle.

"Hanged if it doesn't look like murder," remarked the lieutenant.

"So it is," returned Yankee Doodle, "but it is

legalized by the declaration of war. But whether that removes the sin of taking life is a question."

"Oh, well," returned the lieutenant, "we won't discuss the theological side of it."

"Of course not; we'll leave that with the theologians. There's a fellow squatting under a palmetto just a few rods above the first one I shot at; do you see him?"

"Yes," answered the lieutenant, "and he's aiming his Mauser right now."

"Keep your eye on him, then," and the next moment Yankee Doodle aimed and fired again, and the man under the palmetto jumped up and went limping away.

"Oh, ho, my fine fellow," chuckled Yankee Doodle, "you want to get out of it, eh? Here's another for you," and he aimed his rifle and fired again.

The Spaniard was seen to throw up both hands, drop his Mauser, and sink down to the ground.

"Say!" exclaimed the lieutenant, "that's the best shooting I ever saw."

"Do you think that is as good as the fellow I shot from the boat the other day?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Well, it's not so far, but I think it's just as good."

"Well, let me have the glass there for a few minutes, and I'll locate some more."

The lieutenant passed the glass over to him, and for three or four minutes he quietly surveyed the crest of the hill. While he was doing so a shell from one of the big ships, down in the bay some two miles distant, came shrieking like a demon through the air over their heads.

It struck the hill occupied by the Spaniards just below the crest, exploding with a roar that shook the earth.

"Great Scott, lieutenant!" exclaimed Yankee Doodle, "our occupation is gone."

"So are the Spaniards," laughed the officer of marines, "for they are scampering over the hill like rabbits."

"Those sort of guns interfere with business," laughed Yankee Doodle.

"Maybe it does," was the reply, "but we won't go on a strike against them."

A few more shells from the ships entirely cleared the hill of the enemy, who sought shelter behind a larger one beyond, and were heard from no more that day. The lieutenant of marines told some of his brother officers about Yankee Doodle's sharpshooting, and a party of marines were sent over there to investigate.

They soon found that a Mauser rifle in the hands of a first-class marksman was one of the most deadly weapons known to military men. Nearly a dozen Spaniards were found under the stubble palmetto who had been knocked over by Yankee Doodle's marksmanship.

The American marines were armed with the Medford rifle, which was much shorter than the Mauser,

and would carry scarcely half the distance the other would. It was a sort of carbine for use on shipboard in close quarters.

Many officers, including the colonel in command, congratulated Yankee Doodle on his work, and when the marines heard of it they cheered him whenever he appeared in sight.

Late in the afternoon he left the firing line and went down to the shore to take a swim. He was about to enter the water in company with several others when Jack Wilson appeared with his left arm in a sling.

"Hello, Jack!" he exclaimed, on seeing the cowboy, "what in thunder has happened?"

"There's been the very deuce to pay," was the reply.

"Where?"

"At El Caney and Santiago de Cuba."

"Have they had another battle?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"You bet they had; and the whole situation has changed since you were there. Our boys went at the intrenchments at El Caney, and for several hours it was hotter than it ever gets down below. The Rough Riders went over the intrenchments and did up the Spaniards with their revolvers right in the ditch. They lost scores of good fellows, but Lord bless you, pard, the Spaniards were cut up so badly that they had to take them up in baskets to bury them. Every mother's son of them who escaped alive, has taken refuge behind the intrenchments around the city, and Wheeler and Shafter are now getting ready to jump in and finish them."

Yankee Doodle fairly whistled his astonishment. Then after a pause of a few moments, he asked:

"Where did you get your wound?"

"Right on top of the intrenchments of El Caney, but it didn't stop me from helping along with the fun."

"What in thunder did you come back for after being hurt, Jack?"

"Oh, I wanted to bring the good news," said he, "and besides that I thought you might think I had been wiped out before I got there. I saw General Wheeler, gave him your message, and he told me to tell you that it is all right; that we both had done just what he expected us to do."

In less than an hour the news had reached the firing line of the marines up on the hill, and every man of them gave vent to his enthusiasm in a series of old-fashioned American yells. The men on board the ships out in the bay were given permission to cheer—and cheer they did until they were hoarse.

The balance of the day was spent by the gallant marines cheering and making merry over the splendid victory that had been won by the land forces in front of Santiago, and Jack Wilson, the cowboy, who brought the good news and had a wound to show that he received it in the thick of the fight, was treated royally by everyone who could get at him.

Wounded as he was, he had wended his way

through a pathless forest of over a dozen miles to bring the news to them.

"Jack," said Yankee Doodle to him that evening, "our mission here is ended; for even did they wish to do so, the Spanish commandant at Guantanamo would not now dare attempt to make the move he was expected to make. It is now too late; his golden opportunity has passed, and now we can return without running any risk of being censured for so doing."

"That's so, pard; the general is satisfied with our work, and now as the situation has changed we can take it easy or go back when we please."

CHAPTER XI.

YANKEE DOODLE RETURNS TO SANTIAGO—IN THE TRENCHES BEFORE THE CITY.

THAT night Yankee Doodle and Jack slept under the same blanket, but before they closed their eyes in slumber the former related to his astonished comrade the story of his capture and experience in the prison in Guantanamo.

"Great Caesar, pard!" exclaimed the cowboy, "I'd give a year's pay to find out who that mysterious Unknown is."

"So would I, Jack, and I tried to devise some means of discovering his identity, but everything seemed to be against me. I even hinted to him that when the war ended I would like to know him and show him how much I appreciated his treatment of me. He very promptly told me that his connection with the war would be one of the unwritten pages of its history, and that his identity would forever remain undiscovered. It may be a bit of Spanish diplomacy over which a shadow of mystery has ever lingered. I suppose that is the case of the diplomacy of all nations, in which many things happen that never reach the public."

"Yes, yes," assented Jack, "I guess that is so, but that you and I should get mixed up in it in the way we have will be a puzzle to me as long as I live."

"So it will be to me, Jack; and I am more than ever persuaded that we should never speak of it to any one whatever, unless events take such a course as to convince us of the necessity of acquainting the commanding general with the whole business."

"That's what I think, too, pard. We had better keep mum about it, because when Santiago falls the end of the war will come, notwithstanding the fact that Blanco has an immense army with him in Havana to put up a nasty fight."

"Did you hear anything about the fleet in Santiago Bay?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Oh, that fleet is doomed. Sampson's big sea-dogs lie all the time right in front of the entrance to the harbor, keeping up a sleepless watch, day and night. On the darkest nights that come the flash of their search-lights can be seen for twenty miles out at sea, and when they are turned on the entrance to the harbor the forts on the hills on either side are seen as plainly as at noonday. The Spanish ships cannot

escape, nor can a single Spanish soldier get away from the city; our lines extend clear around to the west side until they strike the water of the bay. If Cervera attempts to make his escape Sampson and Schley will send him to the bottom of the Caribbean Sea. Then Spain will have nothing afloat that could whip a scow-boat; she will throw up the sponge and ask Uncle Sam what he wants."

"Jack," said Yankee Doodle, "that is practically what the Unknown has already said to us."

"Just so, pard; and if ever I meet that man again, I'm goin' to take off my hat and reverence him as a prophet, for he beats Elijah, and Isaiah and Jeremiah, and all those old fellows who made a living by prophesying; but to my mind that fellow beats them all, for he could drop down into the woods alongside of us, or vanish from our sight without our knowing anything about it; and if that doesn't beat the old prophets, I've forgotten all I learned while at Sunday school."

"By George, Jack!" laughed Yankee Doodle, "you put the whole thing in a different light to me, for you clothe him in the garb of the supernatural, which I hadn't thought of before."

"I don't mean to do that, pard," said Jack, "for I am not much given to taking any stock in the supernatural. I've never believed in ghosts or that sort of thing, because I believe that when a man is dead he is dead. But when I meet a man who can look into the future and see things that you and I can see only after they happen, I can't help but stand in awe of him. It may be because I don't know much, but I have lived long enough to understand that there are very few men of all the teeming millions of earth who can pierce the future and foretell what is going to happen."

The two boys finally fell asleep, and when they awoke the next morning, decided to remain with the marines a few days longer in order to give Jack's wound a chance to heal. It was a flesh wound made by a Mauser bullet, which the fatigue of his long tramp through the woods had caused to inflame and give him a great deal of pain.

The day was spent in comparative quiet, for evidently the Spaniards had heard the disastrous news of El Caney, and hence had little heart to continue the fight. A day later, however, desultory firing was kept up all day on the crest of the hill, and again Yankee Doodle went up and added to his reputation as a sharpshooter. Many a Spaniard went down under his deadly aim.

Late in the afternoon of the second day after Jack's arrival some Cubans came in bringing confirmation of his story of El Caney, and later on a dispatch boat from the fleet brought details of the victory.

Then a day later another boat came with the news of the utter destruction of Cervera's fleet as it attempted to escape in the teeth of Sampson's and Schley's war-dogs.

When Yankee Doodle and Jack heard that, the former whispered to the cowboy:

"Jack, the Unknown is hastening the end as fast as possible. Had Cervera's fleet remained in the harbor of Santiago they could have stood us off another month, which would have cost Spain the lives of many of her soldiers and a million dollars a day."

"Do you think he had anything to do with that, pard?" Jack asked.

"I do, Jack; he is simply hastening the inevitable to avoid prolonging a hopeless struggle. When we hear the whole truth you will find out that Cervera has been ordered out by someone higher in authority than himself, and that, too, when there was not one chance in a thousand for him to escape. But with his fleet out of the harbor and at the bottom of the sea the end will come quickly. To-morrow if you can stand the trip we must return to Santiago and be in at the death."

"I can stand it, pard," said Jack, "and I am as anxious to return as you are."

"All right, then; we will start at daylight, for there will soon be another battle fought, in which the Spanish flag will go down to a terrible defeat right there in the trenches."

Early the next morning the two took leave of the camp of marines on the shores of Guantanamo Bay, and started out to wend their way through a trackless forest to rejoin the army in front of Santiago.

Yankee Doodle carried a compass with him at all times, in order to avoid making mistakes when enveloped in the great forests of Cuba. It enabled them to keep a straight course, save where precipices or swamps forced them to turn aside.

Sometimes they struck trails which they followed as long as they led in a westerly direction. When they did not, they plunged again into the woods and pushed straight on towards their destination.

The day was about two-thirds gone when they reached the vicinity of El Caney. There they found thousands of refugees streaming into the small towns over which the Stars and Stripes were flying. They were leaving Santiago to escape the bombardment the American general had threatened. They were sleeping on the bare ground, for there were not houses enough in the place to shelter a tenth part of them, and worse still, hundreds of children were crying for food, even while the American commissaries were distributing rations to them.

It was one of the terrible pictures of war, and yet but a repetition of what had happened in the history of the world for a thousand years where cities were besieged and defended.

The entire front of the American army had been changed, and a new line of intrenchments directly in front of the city of Santiago had been thrown up. The men were in the ditches, and firing was going on all along the line for a distance of three or four miles.

Yankee Doodle immediately sought out the headquarters of General Wheeler, to whom he reported that he had been unable to find any evidence of an intention on the part of the Spanish at Guantanamo to leave their present position.

"In fact," said he, "everything points to a permanent occupation and defense of that city."

"Thank you, my boy," said the general, "you have done your work well and faithfully; if they ever intended to make the movement I fear it is now too late for them to do so."

"Have you any further need for my services, general?"

"Not specially," was the reply, "but if occasion should arise that demands it I shall certainly send for you."

"You will find me with the Rough Riders, general, and Colonel Roosevelt can tell your orderly at any moment where I am."

"All right, my boy; I see you are taking up with a crowd that is always more hungry for a fight than for rations."

"They don't go hungry for rations, general," laughed Yankee Doodle, "for they seem to find something to eat when no other command in the army does."

"I believe you are right about that," laughed the general; "you can trust a cowboy to find something to eat even in the heart of a desert."

"Yes, and they can pick up a fight, too, quicker'n anybody else I know of, and when they find one they fight it to a finish."

Yankee Doodle then saluted the general and returned to the headquarters of the Rough Riders. Their position was at a point whence they could view the enemy's lines for a distance of nearly a mile as well as a large part of the city.

When he joined the boys he had many questions to ask about the terrible fight at El Caney, and in exchange for the stories they told him he related many of his own adventures in the vicinity of Guantanamo.

"What were you doing away out there?" one of the cowboys asked.

"Watching the enemy," he replied, "and seeing that they stayed where they were until we could finish up these fellows in our front out here."

"Are they going to stay there?" he was asked.

"I think they will," he replied; "at least I ordered them to do so."

"The deuce you did! Will they obey orders from you?"

"I didn't ask them whether they would or not; the truth is I didn't hear 'em say anything about it at all."

The Rough Riders laughed heartily, and remarked that anybody could give orders of that kind without any expectation of their being obeyed.

"Oh, yes," he assented, "if one has the cheek to do so; but I am inclined to think they are going to stay there until we get through with these fellows here."

"It won't take us long to do that," said one, "for when the order is given we'll go over those breastworks out there, and finish up with them just as we did at El Caney, and if they don't throw down their

arms and surrender, they will all be buried within twenty-four hours afterwards."

"No doubt of that," said Yankee Doodle, "and when that order is given I'm going to be right in it with you."

"Good! Good!" cried several who were listening to the conversation. "A little hot work will do you good."

"Oh, don't you fellows think that Jack and I have been sitting around resting in the shade, for we have been knocking over Spaniards while standing shoulder to shoulder with the marines down on the shores of Guantanamo Bay."

"Are the marines good fighters?" another asked.

"You can bet they are," he replied, "and you Rough Riders are not one whit ahead of them when it comes to standing right up to the line and giving them shot for shot all day and all night;" and then he related his experience in the fight with the marines on the very day the terrific battle of El Caney was raging. "It was more of a skirmish than a battle," he continued, "where, instead of volleys being fired, men stood up and picked off each other individually. I had to lie under some palmettos, and with a field glass locate a number of them, after which I laid it down, picked up a Mauser and knocked them over one by one, until a shell from one of the ships exploded in their midst and drove them out of sight over the hill."

"Did you knock many of them over?" one of the boys asked.

"About a dozen," he replied, "and after the fight the colonel sent a squad of marines over there to find out if I really had done so. I refer you to him for the truth of this little bit of bragging, which is the first I ever put up in all my life."

"Oh, that's all right," they laughed, "we know that you are a dead shot, but what in thunder are you using a Mauser for?"

"Why, because it is the best rifle in the world; it can carry nearly a thousand yards farther than any gun we have except those used by our regulars, and as Jack and I had to do a good deal of individual fighting while out scouting, the smokeless powder of the Mauser cartridges was absolutely necessary to our safety."

"Oh, you looked out for number one all the time, eh?"

"Yes," he replied, "all the time and every time; for the man who gets killed on purpose dies as a fool."

"That's right, pard," exclaimed a grizzled old Rough Rider; "recklessness is only another name for foolhardiness. I've been fighting Indians for nearly twenty years, and in all that time I never took any chances with them, 'otherwise I would not be here now."

"That's it," said Yankee Doodle; "the Indians know how to shoot, but these Spaniards are the poorest shots in the world, considering that they are nearly all veterans."

While they were talking, Mauser bullets whistled

pretty close about them several times, until finally Yankee Doodle concluded to try his hand at that sort of thing. He held his Mauser in position and waited to see the brown hat of the Spaniard rise up behind the Spanish intrenchments. When he saw one he fired quickly, and the hat was seen to fly off the fellow's head almost before the Spaniard's face was seen.

"Good! Good!" chorused the boys.

"It's good for me!" laughed Yankee Doodle, "but bad for him!"

The incident was repeated several times within the next hour, and had the effect to make the enemy be extremely cautious directly in their front.

Night came on and Yankee Doodle remained with the Rough Riders in the trenches, exchanging shots with the enemy, firing at flashes of their guns.

When the usual downpour of rain came at midnight, the trench in which they stood was nearly filled with water. Soon after the rain ceased, the order was passed along the line for the men to prepare for the final struggle to begin at sunrise.

"All right," said the Rough Riders, when they got the order, "we are ready at a moment's notice, though we are tired, hungry and sleepy."

When day dawned Colonel Roosevelt and the officers under him gave their personal attention to seeing that the men got a good breakfast. The colonel himself passed along the line speaking to the men individually, telling them that they were going to end the war that day, and that he wanted them to do things that would send their names ringing around the world.

"We'll do that, colonel," they replied, "and Spain will remember the Rough Riders for five hundred years to come."

But the sun rose and climbed higher and higher while the men waited for the order to open the fight.

Suddenly the cry ran along the line that the enemy had run up the white flag.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

As the men in the trenches were waiting the news came that it was a flag of truce rather than a flag that betokened surrender. Negotiations were going on between the commanders of the two armies, and during that time not a shot was fired by either side. Rumors flew thick and fast. Some were true, but many were gross exaggerations.

Colonel Roosevelt, however, who was not the man to be hampered by the etiquette of West Point, always told his men in the trenches what he believed to be true and what false.

"They are haggling for terms, boys," said he, "and General Shafter is demanding unconditional surrender. We've got 'em; they can't get away. It may be that we will have one more set-to with them to convince them of that fact."

"Colonel," cried out a cowboy from the trenches,

"for Heaven's sake go and beg the general to let us mix up with 'em just once more."

The colonel laughed and shook his head, simply saying:

"Wait, boys."

Noon came and the sun beat down on the men in the trenches with a fierce heat that seemed to be fighting for the enemy. Later in the afternoon the news came that the truce had been extended until noon of the next day.

"Jack," said Yankee Doodle to his comrade, "there is something behind this that General Shafter himself doesn't suspect."

"What is it, pard?" asked Jack.

"It is the working out of the plans of that mysterious Unknown."

"But he isn't here, pard," said Jack.

"Very true, but he can reach out in some mysterious way that we know nothing about, and I'll wager my gun and all my clothes that the last shot between these two armies has been fired."

"What's that, pard?" another asked.

"I say that the last shot between these two armies has been fired," repeated Yankee Doodle.

"What in thunder do you know about it, pard?"

"Oh, I guess I don't know any more than you do," was the careless reply, "but perhaps I do a little more thinking."

"And a little more bragging," sneered the other.

"Oh, no, comrade, there's no bragging, any further than for the whole army. I simply think that the end has come, and that what fighting will be done hereafter will be elsewhere."

"Oh, well," said the other, "I don't see that your thinker is any bigger than mine."

"Oh, as for that," laughed Yankee Doodle, "your hat is perhaps one or two sizes larger than mine; it isn't the size of a man's head so much as what he has in it. There are heads and heads you know."

The quiet laugh at the cowboy's expense rather nettled him, and he retorted:

"Oh, you think you've got something in your head, do you?"

"Yes, a little bit," was the quiet reply.

"Why don't you use a fine toothed comb?" the cowboy asked, and the others roared hilariously at Yankee Doodle's expense, who promptly replied:

"I keep one all the time, pard; and what's more I use it daily. The trouble with you is that you pay no attention to your head except to comb it; you never try to get anything inside of it, hence, as a thinker it's a failure. Perhaps it is much easier for you to remember things that you are told than it is to think for yourself; so I hope you will remember when this thing is over what I am now saying to you, and that is that those fellows out there have got enough of it and that no matter how long they may haggle for terms they are not going to do any more fighting; and what is more, when Toral surrenders, Spain will surrender, too, and that more soldiers than

are now in Santiago will become prisoners of war when Toral signs the capitulation."

"What do you think of that, pard?" a grizzled Rough Rider asked Jack.

"I think enough of it," replied Jack, "to gamble on the truth of it."

When night came on again Yankee Doodle and Jack left the trenches, after first speaking to Colonel Roosevelt that they wished to do so.

"Where are you going?" the colonel asked.

"I am merely going to look around for points."

"All right," laughed the colonel. "You are something of a free lance who can come and go at will, but Jack belongs to my command. He must remain on duty with his comrades."

Jack had to return, whilst Yankee Doodle made his way alone to the headquarters of General Wheeler.

Of course, he could ask the great cavalry commander no questions, other than to know whether or not he had anything for him to do.

"Not a thing," replied the general, "but you can remain here and await orders."

"General," said Yankee Doodle, "you will meet the Spanish flag of truce to-morrow between the two lines; I want to ask permission to go with you in some capacity, as an orderly or anything that would be an excuse for my doing so."

The general was surprised at the request, and looked at him sharply without answering for nearly a minute. Then he asked:

"Why do you wish to go?"

"Because, general, I have reason to think that a certain person will be there on the Spanish side whom I saw at Guantanamo."

"What's that?" the general asked sharply.

Yankee Doodle looked around and saw some of the staff officers present, whose faces expressed as much surprise as did the general's, and he promptly remarked:

"If I can see you privately for a few minutes, general, I may be able to tell you something of importance."

The general immediately signaled to his staff to retire from his tent, and when they had done so Yankee Doodle, in a low tone of voice, said to him:

"General, I was captured at Guantanamo and locked up in a prison cell in the city. At midnight a tall, dignified old gentleman in plain citizen's clothes entered my cell with a dim lantern, and ordered me to rise up and follow him. I did so, and he led me out on the street, passed many sentinels, to whom he gave the password, led me out beyond the trenches, and told me to go my way.

"I turned to thank him, and he spoke as one high in authority, but in rather a sad tone of voice, saying: 'The end is near at hand, Americano, and it must come with no more sacrifices on the part of Spain.'"

"My boy, have you been dreaming?" the general asked, with a look of astonishment on his face.

"If I was, general," he answered, "I must have walked out of that prison in my sleep. I don't know who the man was, but the idea has taken a firm hold upon me that he means to end the war without any more sacrifices on the part of Spain. I saw enough to understand that he was one high in authority, if not supreme in command, and I wanted to see for myself whether or not he is mixed up in negotiations now going on with the Spanish commander in Santiago de Cuba."

"My boy," said the general, "had any one else but you told me such a story I would send him away in haste, for it seems incredible, to say the least. Remain here at headquarters, and accompany me when we go out to meet the flag of truce. But you must keep some twenty or thirty paces in the rear, leading my horse."

"Thank you, general."

Yankee Doodle lay down in his blanket in one of the headquarter tents and spent the night there, and the next morning he was up with the earliest riser.

At nine o'clock a flag of truce was seen coming out from the enemy's line accompanied by four men, at least three of whom wore the uniforms of officers.

General Wheeler, with one of his staff and a member of General Shafter's, went forward to meet them. He issued an order to Yankee Doodle to bring his horse along, and the latter immediately seized the bit and followed the party some twenty or thirty paces in the rear.

When they met the Spanish party they proved to be General Toral and two officers of his staff, whilst another tall, elderly, dignified-looking man in a garb not unlike that of a priest stood some fifteen or twenty paces back in their rear.

"Great Scott!" muttered Yankee Doodle to himself, "there is the mysterious Unknown, and he recognizes me as plainly as I do him."

The two stared at each other for upwards of an hour, during which time negotiations were going on between Generals Wheeler and Toral. Once the Spanish commander excused himself to Wheeler and went to the side of the Unknown, where a short whispered conversation took place which could be heard by no one but themselves.

Several times the Unknown was seen to nod his head approvingly, after which the general left him and returned to the conference. A few minutes later General Wheeler was observed searching the pockets of his coat as if for a paper, letter or memorandum. Not finding it, he turned and made his way to his horse, open his saddle wallet, and examined for a minute or two its contents.

While he was doing so, he asked Yankee Doodle:

"Do you see your man?"

"Yes, general; that is he standing back there dressed like a priest. He is the man who opened the prison door for me at Guantanamo."

The general quickly returned and joined the Spanish officer, and several times glanced in the direction of the Unknown.

A half hour later the articles of capitulation were signed. The terms were honorable to Spain, and at the same time surprising to all the American generals; for not only were the Spanish forces in the trenches at Santiago surrendered, but those at Guantanamo and three other places, amounting in all to more than twenty-five thousand men.

As soon as the general returned to his quarters, he whispered to Yankee Doodle:

"My boy, notwithstanding my implicit confidence in your veracity, I doubted your story up to the moment capitulation was signed, but now I know that every word of it is true. I want you to devote your

entire time to the discovery of that unknown personage, and see if he is among the prisoners that surrendered."

"All right, general; I'll do my best."

When the news reached the soldiers in the trenches that the surrender was complete, there was great rejoicing from the highest in command to the lowest private in the ranks.

The old Rough Rider who had sneered at Yankee Doodle for knowing so much about what was going to happen, appeared before him and saluted him with all the ceremony due the highest officer in the army. Yankee Doodle returned the salute promptly, laughed, patted him on the head, and remarked:

"I told you there were heads and heads, didn't I? and that some of them had something inside while others had a few things on the outside."

"Yes, yes, pard," assented the Rough Rider. "When you run for President of the United States I'll vote for you."

"All right, comrade, make a notch on your head, so you won't forget it. But be careful not to nominate me before I grow a beard."

"Oh, that's all right, pard," laughed the other. "I'll simply wait until you sound the call; then I'll be the first to respond."

When the surrender was finally completed, and the Stars and Stripes were raised over the public buildings of Santiago, the American and Spanish soldiers mingled freely with each other. For three days Yankee Doodle went among the Spanish officers looking everywhere for the Unknown. At the end of that time he was fully persuaded that in some mysterious way he had left the city and escaped.

The question was put to Toral and a number of his staff officers as to whether or not all the men and staff officers who were in the city at the time the capitulation was signed were still there.

They replied that as far as they knew they were.

A party of Spanish officers accompanied by the American officers was sent to Guantanamo to receive the surrender of the garrison there. Yankee Doodle accompanied them for the purpose of again searching for the Unknown, but again he was disappointed, as that mysterious individual was nowhere to be found. He accompanied the officers to the other posts that had been included in the surrender, and there scanned the entire list of officers with a like result.

He was never found, and his identity remains a mystery to this day, and during all the negotiations, both in Cuba and at Madrid, no hint of his personality was made or heard. But his all pervading influence in the surrender of the Spanish military force in Eastern Cuba was felt and seen.

Of course no questions could be asked by the American officers as to his identity, because the matter was kept secret from them. The fact, however, that nearly fifteen thousand soldiers outside of Santiago de Cuba were included in the articles of surrender was sufficient proof that it was his work.

Threats of court-martials have been vaguely made by the press of Spain, but in rather a mild form. But that he was the representative of the government in hastening the inevitable for the purpose of saving the throne is unquestioned by the few who are in the secret. Time alone can reveal the mystery, for never before perhaps in the history of a great nation was there so much at stake for a government as in Spain during the siege of Santiago.

Perhaps in the future we may learn how it was that the last vestige of Spain's colonial power could be wrenched from her while yet the throne remained intact. As it is, it yet remains a mystery.

[THE END.]

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